U.S. Department of Education

Strategic Plan, 1998-2002

DRAFT: For consultation and review

June 26, 1997

The Department of Education's Mission

To ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation.

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U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002

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February 1997

All students should be able to:

1. Read independently by the end of the 3rd grade.

2. Master challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry, by the end of the 8th grade.

3. By age 18, be prepared for and able to afford at least two years of college and to pursue lifelong learning.

4. Have a talented, dedicated, and well-prepared teacher in their classroom.

5. Have their classroom connected to the Internet by the year 2000 and be technologically literate.

6. Learn in strong, safe, and drug-free schools.

7. Learn according to challenging and clear standards of achievement and accountability.

Strategic Plan for the U.S. Department of Education

Introduction

The American people consistently rank education among their top national priorities. In preparing for the 21st century, a sound education is essential to securing a good job, becoming a responsible and contributing citizen, and achieving a meaningful personal life. In 1990, national goals for education were set to focus the efforts of governments, educators, and parents and communities on education reforms needed to meet the mandate for education. After taking stock of progress towards the goals, President Clinton announced his "Call to Action for American Education" in February 1997 which identified critical areas needing work to accomplish the goals. In response, Secretary Riley and senior Department of Education officials developed seven priorities for Department action.

As required by the Government Performance and Results Act, the Department has prepared a long-range strategic plan for 1998-2002. The plan reflects the new Department policy priorities and integrates them with other work derived from our mission and program authorities. The plan sets out our goals, objectives, performance indicators, and key strategies. The plan is not a static document—it will be refined to respond to new legislation, feedback from our customers, and emerging national needs.

Accomplishments tracked by ED's initial strategic plan

In December 1994, the U.S. Department of Education released its first-ever strategic plan, a working document that served as the forerunner to the current proposed plan. This first plan was widely distributed, with more than 1,000 copies circulated to the Congress, stakeholder groups, educators and others interested in the Department's plans. Internally, the Department has used the plan to guide performance improvements and help provide employees with an understanding of the Department's goals and each employee's important contribution to their success. The plan reflected major legislative accomplishments and laid out strategies and indicators that have been used to monitor implementation of our new or revised programs. Key accomplishments include:

- **In partnership with the Congress and the Administration, major legislation achievements provided the Department with a historic and more coherent set of laws.**
    - Elementary and secondary education reforms, including *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* and *Improving America's Schools Act*, promote challenging education standards for all children, safe and disciplined schools, effective teaching practices, expanded technology, charter schools, and strengthened family involvement.
    - *The School-to-Work Opportunities Act* helps communities and states put in place high-quality systems of academic and occupational education linking schools with postsecondary institutions and employers.
    - The *Student Loan Reform Act* helps make the college student aid system more efficient through authorizing a new Direct Student Loan Program that promotes streamlined provision of aid and gives postsecondary institutions and students expanded choice among alternative aid providers.

— The *Educational Research, Development, Dissemination, and Improvement Act* restructured the Department's research office and set new priorities for dissemination and improvement activities.
— The new *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997* improves basic academics, increases parental involvement, and moves federal dollars to the classroom. Students with disabilities will now be expected, to the maximum extent possible, to meet the same high educational expectations that have been set for all students by States and local schools.

■ **An increasingly streamlined Department of Education is more cost-efficient in providing education support and services.**
— Since 1994, the Department has worked with Congress to eliminate 64 programs totaling more than $700 million.
— To date, the Department has eliminated or reinvented/simplified almost every regulation that were on the books in FY 1995—with 94% affected and 39% completely eliminated. More than 2000 pages of regulations were affected.
— 10% of our information collection requirements were cut, translating into 5.4 million fewer hours for schools, students, parents, states and other customers to complete required forms.
— Project EASI (Easy Access for Students and Institutions) is a collaborative effort launched with government, business and education leaders to improve the way students apply for and receive student financial aid.
— The number of Department employees as of April 1997 was 4,613, a 10% decrease below the 1993 FTE level of 5,151. This decrease occurred while the Department's discretionary budget increased by $2.6 billion (an 11% increase) and the Department now makes direct student loans for $10 billion per year (a third of the total market).

■ **A more effective Department of Education can better serve the public:**
— Loan default rates have been cut by nearly one-half, from 22.4% in 1990 to 10.7% in 1994.
— Over $12 billion has been loaned to students through the Direct Loan Program—the new loan program that cuts out middlemen and makes loans directly to students. In this new program, 83% of participating institutions report they are satisfied or very satisfied. The satisfaction level for institutions in the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program, which works through lenders such as banks, is 79%, a substantial increase over prior levels and likely to be due partially to the beneficial competition of the Direct Loan program.
— As a result of improved and tougher ED oversight, 875 postsecondary institutions have lost eligibility to participate in student financial aid programs, including 672 that cannot participate in any aid program and 203 that cannot participate in loan programs.
— The percentage of outstanding defaults on student loans collected each year has steadily increased, from 6.9 percent in FY 1993 to 9.2 percent in FY 1996.
— A strengthened research and statistical office is providing more timely and useful information on the condition of the American education system and on research-based improvements.
— Performance measurement supported through program evaluations is increasingly providing the Department with important information to gauge performance and guide improvement.
— A strengthened Labor-Management Partnership is helping all employees to work cooperatively and team together to achieve better Departmental results while enabling the Department to win family-friendly work place awards.
— The ED web page receives 5 million hits each month and our toll-free 1-800-USA-LEARN number provides 5,000 callers a week with access to comprehensive information about Department publications and programs.

- **A Department increasingly built around partnerships is better able to work collectively to achieve national educational priorities:**
  - — The formation of the broad-based "Partnership for Family Involvement in Education" now consists of 2,800 members to bring together schools, families, communities, religious organizations and employers to work together to support learning.
  - — READ*WRITE*NOW, a grassroots community literacy initiative that links tutors with children that need help, has grown from serving 500,000 children in 1994 to 1.5 million in 1997.
  - — Over 300 waivers have been granted to communities to provide greater flexibility without sacrificing results under the first time ever waiver authority under Goals 2000, School-to-Work and the reauthorized ESEA.
  - — Nine states have been granted broad authority under ED-Flex to waive a range of federal statutory or regulatory requirement an agree to be held accountable for the academic performance of their students.
  - — 49 states have submitted consolidated program plans covering several ESEA programs and federal vocational education grants, instead of separate plans for each program.

Draft U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002

This draft strategic plan builds on and revises the prior strategic plan to introduce the aims and strategies encompassed in the President's 1997 "Call to Action for American Education." The plan also updates earlier objectives and strategies based on our experience using the first strategic plan.

The draft plan is organized around four goals.

Goal 1: Help all students reach challenging academic standards so that they are prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.
Goal 2: Build a solid foundation for learning.
Goal 3: Ensure access to postsecondary education and lifelong learning.
Goal 4: Make ED a high-performance organization by focusing on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction.

The set of goals sustains our commitment to improving American education—so that all children are able to succeed in school and all Americans to enter and complete higher education programs—while improving the efficiency of Department operations and meeting the needs of our partners and customers.

Development process. This plan was prepared based on several resources:

- The National Education Goals
- President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education
- Secretary Riley's Seven Priorities for the Department of Education
- Update to the Department's first strategic plan prepared by Department assistant secretaries
- Individual program indicator plans developed by most major programs in the Department

While some initial reviews of this draft strategic plan have taken place internally, additional reviews that move consultation deeper within the agency will be undertaken this summer, as noted below.

Consultation process. Extensive stakeholder discussions on plan components have begun and will be expanded now that the draft plan has been submitted to the Congress:

- *Congress.* Congressional input was obtained when the first strategic plan was distributed in its working form. To obtain input to guide current plan development, over the last six months the

Department began discussions on its strategic plan and on 17 major individual program performance plans with Congressional authorizing, appropriations, and government operations committees. The Department looks forward to continuing and more in-depth consultations with the Congress on the present draft plan.

■ *Stakeholders.*
— Many program assistant secretaries and heads of major program offices have discussed draft program-level indicator plans with their grantees and stakeholder groups. A few examples:
– The Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education shared the vocational education and adult education plans with state directors last fall to get feedback and suggestions for improvement.
– The Director, Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs, held a session at the annual conference of the National Association for Bilingual Education this past February on the draft bilingual education plan. She got a standing-room-only turnout—the field was very interested in the indicator plan—and a positive response overall.
– The Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education shared the set of postsecondary student financial aid indicator plans at a recent monthly meeting with key stakeholders.
— The Department is mailing the draft plan to all key stakeholders requesting comments and suggestions for improvement.

■ *Other Federal agencies.* The Department will consult with other federal agencies involved in education this summer—comparing strategic plans and identifying joint strategies. Some of the agencies that we will consult with include the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, Treasury, Agriculture, and Justice; the National Science Foundation; and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

■ *Customers.* The Department's web page will shortly include the entire plan and opportunity to comment electronically or by letter.

■ *ED staff.* Internally, the Department will be working closely with its employees to solicit their views and comments, including meetings with the Labor-Management Partnership.

Mission, Functions, and Operations of the Department

The Department of Education's mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation. It will fulfill this mission through implementing the framework of goals and objectives shown on page 6.

Key functions

To carry out this mission, the Department works in partnership with states, schools, communities, higher education institutions, and financial institutions—as well as administrators and teachers, families, and employers. Key functions for the agency include:

- Leadership in mobilizing the nation in support of national educational priorities.
- Grants to education agencies and institutions to strengthen teaching and learning in elementary and secondary education schools and institutions of higher education.
- Student loans and grants to students and their families to help pay for the costs of postsecondary education.
- Monitoring and enforcement of civil rights to ensure that the United States' education system is accessible and fair for all students.
- Support for statistics, research, development, evaluation, and dissemination of information to improve educational quality and effectiveness.

Department of Education (ED) Operations

ED is the smallest federal department, with less than 5,000 staff.

Some specific facts about ED, as of FY 1997:

- FTE ceiling (staffing) in FY 1997: 4,613

- FY 1997 appropriation: $29.4 billion
    - Grants to state and local educational agencies, higher education institutions, and other entities, loans, and contracts: $28.4 billion (96.7% of the total appropriation).
    - Federal administration (salaries and expenses): $955 million, or 3.3% of the total appropriation for the agency.

- Number of programs administered: 197.

- In 1993-94: Federal funds represented—
    - 8.8% of all education funding (public and private).
    - 6.5% of K-12 funding (public and private).
    - 12.3% of funding for postsecondary institutions (excluding student financial aid).
    - 74.7% of all student financial aid awarded to postsecondary students.

U.S. Department of Education
Framework of Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Mission: To ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation.

Goal 1. Help all students reach challenging academic standards so that they are prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.	Goal 2. Build a solid foundation for learning.	Goal 3. Ensure access to postsecondary education and lifelong learning.	Goal 4. Make ED a high-performance organization by focusing on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction.
Objectives	**Objectives**	**Objectives**	**Objectives**
1.1 States develop and implement challenging standards and assessments for all students in the core academic subjects.	2.1 All children enter school ready to learn.	3.1 Postsecondary education is affordable for all Americans.	4.1 Our customers receive fast, seamless service and dissemination of high-quality information and products.
1.2 Every state has a school-to-work system that increases student achievement and broadens career opportunities for all.	2.2 Every child reads independently by the end of the third grade.	3.2 Students receive the information and support services they need to prepare for and complete postsecondary education.	4.2 Our partners have the support and flexibility they need without diminishing accountability for results.
1.3 Schools are safe, disciplined, and drug-free.	2.3 Every eighth grader masters challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry.	3.3 All adults can strengthen their skills and improve their earning power throughout their lives.	4.3 An up-to-date knowledge base is available from education research to support education reform and equity.
1.4 A talented and dedicated teacher is in every classroom in America.	2.4 Special populations receive appropriate services and assessments consistent with high standards.		4.4 Our information technology investments are sound and used to improve impact and efficiency.
1.5 Families and communities are fully involved with schools and education.			4.5 The Department is a learning organization with high-performing employees.
1.6. Public school choice supports flexibility and family-community concerns.			4.6 Management of our programs and services ensures financial integrity.
1.7 Schools use advanced technology for all students and teachers to improve education.			4.7 All levels of the agency meet the Results Act goal to become fully performance-driven.

Goal 1. Help all students reach challenging academic standards so that they are prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.

End outcome indicators

Performance Indicators:
1. *Increasing percentages of all students will meet or exceed basic, proficient, and advanced performance levels in reading, math and other core subjects on such measures as the National Assessment of Educational Progress and state assessments aligned with challenging standards.*
2. *Students in high-poverty schools will show continuous improvement in reaching proficiency levels comparable to those for the nation.*
3. *High school attendance and graduation will increase, particularly in high-poverty schools and among students with disabilities and others at risk of school failure to a national goal of 90% by 2000.*
4. *The percentage of high school graduates completing at least three years of science and three years of math will increase 10% between 1996 and 2000.*
5. *Increasing numbers of high school students complete advanced placement courses.*
6. *Students in high-poverty schools served by federal programs will show comparable increases in completion of challenging course work, including advanced placement courses, that will enable them to pursue higher education or other options.*

The federal government has an important but limited role to play in education reform. Federal support seeks to help states and local communities strengthen schools and improve educational performance for all children so that the nation can meet the economic and social challenges of the 21st century.

The key to improving student performance is comprehensive and sustained education reform that addresses all the areas that support learning. States and communities—not the federal government—are developing challenging academic standards for every child to meet, to ensure that all children know that their schools and communities have high expectations for their academic performance. To further support student academic success, state school-to-work systems place learning in the meaningful context of the world of work and encourage students to prepare for postsecondary education and high-skill employment.

Another key area is the learning environment. To learn, students must have schools that are safe and orderly and promote positive values. Also essential to high-quality learning are talented and dedicated teachers. In addition, teachers and students need access to advanced technology to assist instruction and provide students with skills they will need for work and further education.

A third area of support is family and community involvement. Schools, parents, and communities all have responsibilities to work together to support student learning. To achieve effective education reform that meets the needs of all students, everyone must be involved, including students; parents; educational leaders at the school, district, and state levels; community members, businesses and religious groups; and government at all levels.

Objectives, Indicators, and Strategies

Objective 1.1: States develop and implement challenging standards and assessments for all students in the core academic subjects.

Performance Indicators:

7. *By 1998, all states have challenging content and performance standards in place for two or more core subjects.*
8. *By 2001, all states have assessments aligned to challenging content and performance standards for two or more core subjects.*
9. *By 2002, most of the general public and parents are aware of the importance of challenging academic standards for all children, including at least the majority of parents from low-income families.*

Support for standards-based reform has deepened over the past six years and is currently part of almost all State education reform plans. The support for standards that came initially from subject matter and professional associations has deepened to include state policy makers, business leaders, and broader community coalitions. While understanding of the concept is broadening, considerable work needs to be done to move this support from understanding standards to implementing them in the classroom.

Changes in instruction and curriculum will require even greater effort over the next five years than the original challenges to support the concept of standards. Survey results and other sources indicate that developing assessments and related student performance standards, improving professional development programs, and linking accountability to school and student performance may be the most effective policy levers for the Department. The federal government can assist through support and guidance on challenging standards and assessments, and by offering highly focused, voluntary national tests that can provide benchmarks for parents and communities.

Core Strategies:
- **Support for standards and assessment development**. Provide financial support to states to develop and implement clear, challenging academic standards and aligned assessments in ways that promote excellence and equity through Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act programs such as Title I Aid for Disadvantaged Children, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other Federal programs designed to help all children achieve to high academic standards.
- **Technical assistance and information sharing**. Provide technical assistance and information sharing to states and school districts in implementing challenging academic standards and aligned assessments through the Department's comprehensive technical assistance centers, education laboratories, research and development centers, and the new integrated review teams.
- **Public awareness and community engagement**. Increase public understanding and support for having challenging academic standards and for the national assessments in reading and math through a national campaign of awareness and community engagement.
- **Federal programs incorporating standards**. Provide technical assistance, guidance, and models of quality standards and their effective implementation to support the efforts of states to link Title I and other federally-supported programs to state standards.

Objective 1.2: Every state has a school-to-work system that increases student achievement and broadens career opportunities.

Performance Indicators:
10. *In local school-to-work systems, the percentage of students completing high school and entering postsecondary education will increase annually.*
11. *One million youth will be engaged actively in school-to-work systems by 2000.*
12. *Thirty percent of high schools will have key school-to-work system components in place by 2000.*
13. *Employers increasingly provide work-based learning slots for school-to-work system students.*
14. *All youths with disabilities age 14 and older will have IEPs with statements of transition service needs that focus on courses of study in an advanced placement or vocational education program.*

School-to-work is one response to over a decade of renewed interest in improving American education. Since the early 1980s, researchers, educators, employers, and policy makers have sought ways to make education relevant to students' future careers, adapt instruction to the ways in which students learn best, and ensure that students learn the habits and skills that employers value. By adding meaningful context from the world of work, educators hoped to engage the interest and intellect of students and help them learn more effectively. Whether learning by doing and in context is accomplished at school or in a work setting, school-to-work seeks to improve career prospects and academic achievement in high school— and thereby boost enrollment in postsecondary education and increase the likelihood of obtaining high skill, high wage employment.

The School-to-Work program operates through a partnership between the Departments of Education and Labor. Every state has access to seed money for a comprehensive school-to-work transition system with three core components: work-based learning, school-based learning, and connecting activities. To date, 37 states have competed successfully to receive one-time-only 5-year grants to help implement their school-to-work systems. These systems integrate academic and vocational education; are being built on and expand programs such as tech-prep, vocational education, and career academies; link secondary and postsecondary education; provide work site learning opportunities; and fully involve the private sector.

Core Strategies:
- **Participation.** Expand opportunities for secondary and postsecondary school students to participate in School-to-Work systems through technical assistance, identification of promising practices, and evaluation of states' progress.
- **Financial support for system-building.** Help build comprehensive school-to-work systems in every state through grants under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act and by supporting high-quality technical training through vocational education and tech-prep education.
- **High schools and colleges.** Engage high schools, postsecondary institutions, and adult high schools in building school-to-work systems by sponsoring a national information center, creating networks that include educators, employers and other key stakeholder groups, and sponsoring efforts to align postsecondary admissions policies with new methods of assessing high school student performance.
- **Employer participation.** Build strong employer participation in school-to-work by targeting outreach activities at employers and their organizations and through collaboration with the National Employer Leadership Council.
- **Professional development.** Prepare teachers to fully participate in school-to-work by assisting colleges of education to incorporate school-to-work elements in their curriculum.
- **Links with other reforms.** Align key procedures in the school-to-work initiative with those under the Perkins Vocational Education Act, Adult Education Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Improving America's Schools Act, Goals 2000, and the Department of Labor's Job Training Partnership Act. In particular, align grant-making procedures, financial audit processes, and performance reporting systems.

Objective 1.3: Schools are safe, disciplined, and drug-free.

Performance Indicators:

15. *Recent increasing rates of alcohol and drug use among school-aged children will slow and begin to fall by 2000.*
16. *The number of criminal and violent incidents in schools by students will show continuous decreases between now and 2002.*
17. *The percentage of students reporting negative attitudes toward drug and alcohol use will decline significantly between now and 2002.*
18. *By 1999, at least 75% of local educational agencies participating in the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program will use prevention programs based on the Department's principles of effectiveness.*
19. *By 1999, all states will conduct periodic statewide surveys or collect statewide data of alcohol and drug use of students and incidents of crime and violence in schools.*
20. *The percentage of teachers who are appropriately trained to address discipline problems in the classroom will increase significantly by 2000.*

After more than a decade of declines, significant increases have occurred in illegal drug use by American youth. Rates of interpersonal violence are unacceptably high, and the seriousness of violent activity in and around schools appears to be escalating.

Although significant federal support has been provided to schools to help them develop and implement drug prevention programs and activities, these efforts have not been universally successful. Definitive research findings about effective school-based prevention programs and strategies have been slow to emerge, and the data necessary to assess local problems and evaluate progress toward reducing youth drug use and violence are not readily available. More needs to be done to improve the quality, quantity, and dissemination of information about research findings on effective drug and violence prevention. Also, additional support needs to be provided to states and local school districts to enhance their capacity to assess their problems and the effectiveness of their ongoing prevention activities.

Core Strategies:
- **Legislation**. Propose principles of effectiveness for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act to focus its support on promising practices and encourage use of sound information for program improvement.
- **Financial support.** Continue to fund states and local school districts under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act program, while working to improve the quality of local activities.
- **Public attitudes**. Help change the attitudes of youth and parents on the harmful nature of drug use, working with other agencies, through media campaigns and dissemination of information.
- **School and community awareness of effective approaches**.
  — Disseminate effective programs and strategies through technical assistance and training, conferences, publications, and widespread dissemination of materials using technology.
  — Provide teacher training under such programs as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Professional Development program to improve teachers' skills in reducing conflict.
- **Research and evaluation**. Identify the most effective violence and drug prevention programming.
- **Improved data systems.** Improve the capacity of states and school districts to collect and analyze information on alcohol and drug use and violent behavior through developing model performance indicators and data systems supporting intensive technical assistance and training.
- **Interagency coordination**. Work with other federal agencies, including the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Transportation; the President's Crime Prevention Council, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy, to coordinate strategies to reduce drug and alcohol use and violence.

Objective 1.4: A talented and dedicated teacher is in every classroom in America.

Performance Indicators:
21. *Throughout the nation the percentage of secondary school teachers who have at least a minor in the subject they teach increases annually.*
22. *The percentage of teachers and principals across the nation who rate other teachers as very effective increases annually.*
23. *By 2002, 75% of states will raise initial teacher certification standards to align with high content and student performance standards.*
24. *The percentage of new teachers who leave the profession within the first 3 years continuously decreases.*
25. *The number of nationally board certified teachers increases to 105,000 by 2006.*

A talented, dedicated, and well-prepared teaching force is one of the most important ingredients for education reform. Without outstanding teachers, there will be little chance of success for students to succeed in a changing workplace and society. Research indicates that teachers' knowledge and skill make a crucial difference in what students learn. Research also demonstrates the value of intensive and sustained high-quality professional development that is based on new models of teaching and learning. The current teaching force needs high quality professional development if all teachers are to be able to teach a diverse student population to challenging standards.

American schools will need to hire two million teachers in the next decade due to increased student enrollment and the retirement of an aging teaching force. However, thirty percent of all new teachers leave the profession in the first three years because of a lack of support and a "sink or swim" approach to induction. About one-fourth of newly hired teachers lack the qualifications for their jobs. New teachers must be well prepared to help diverse learners master challenging content and performance standards.

Core Strategies:
- **Improving the quality of new teachers.**
  — Support programs to recruit talented Americans of all ages, particularly people of diverse backgrounds, to become teachers.
  — Support programs to improve teacher education so that future teachers teach all students to high standards and meet high certification and licensing standards.
  — Encourage and support special efforts to retain new teachers.
- **Financial support for professional development.** Provide funds to states and schools through the Eisenhower and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) professional development programs—as well as under other programs in which professional development is an allowable activity (for example, Title I Grants for Disadvantaged Children, Perkins Vocational Education State Grants, Bilingual Education, Technology Literacy Challenge Grants)
- **Licensing standards.** Through the Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching, support rigorous standards for teacher licensing, including states' efforts to align licensing and certification requirements with challenging content standards and performance-based assessments.
- **Teacher recognition and accountability.** Support programs that recognize and reward good teachers and improve or remove incompetent ones.
- **Research, development, and dissemination.**
  — Establish the Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching to work with stakeholders and carry out applied research.
  — Establish a Teacher Policy Center to conduct research on policies related to teaching.
- **Monitoring trends.** Issue a biennial national report card on teacher quality starting in 1998.

Objective 1.5: Families and communities are fully involved with schools and education.

Performance Indicators:
26. *The percentage of students who come to school prepared for learning and having completed their homework will increase substantially over the next five years.*
27. *The percentage of young children who read regularly at home with their parents and on their own (at least 15 minutes a day, five days a week) will increase to 90% by 2002.*
28. *The percentage of parents who meet with teachers about their children's learning will show continuous improvement, reaching 90% by 2002.*
29. *The percentage of parents who say that the school actively encourages and facilitates family involvement by respecting and responding to parents' concerns and by involving them in decisions regarding their children will show continuous improvement.*

Over thirty years of research clearly shows us that all families—whether they are rich or poor, whether the parents finished high school or not, or whether kids are in preschool or high school—can help their children learn. Greater family involvement in children's learning is a critical link to achieving a high-quality education and a safe, disciplined learning environment for every student. The Department can support families through the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, research and information on effective practices and involvement programs.

Core Strategies:
- **Increase public understanding and outreach.** Convey the importance of and promote family and community involvement in the learning of children in school and after school through: public awareness campaigns in major newspapers and educational organization publications, and outreach efforts to provide information on programs, research and best practices.
- **Expand the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education**.
  — Sign on 1,000 new members annually by outreach efforts of current partners, membership drives at public forums, and general distribution of membership forms and information about the Partnership in Departmental publications.
  — Develop opportunities and capacity for schools, families, communities, and employers to work together through: continuing nationwide activities of the Partnership (Read*Write*Now; America Goes Back to School, and a new initiative focused around middle schools); expanded school-family, employer, community and religious group activities; and federal program assistance (Title I compacts, Goals 2000 Parent Assistance Centers, IDEA Parent Training and Information Centers, 21st Century Learning Centers, dissemination of materials).
- **Strengthened program assistance and support for family involvement.** Coordinate and strengthen various parent involvement provisions across federal programs including: expand Goals 2000 parents centers to every state; provide assistance to support Title I compacts; support continued parental outreach and information in school-to-work; and disseminate information on parental provisions in the new special education legislation.
- **Research, development, and evaluation**. Launch a systematic analytic agenda to identify and highlight programs and practices that successfully connect families, schools, and communities to school improvement efforts. Evaluate the activities of the Partnership and its members.
- **New after-school programs**. To support students and families after school and to extend learning time and promote safety, help create 1,000 new after-school programs by the year 2002 by expanding the role of the Community Partners and by providing federal program assistance (Title I, 21st Century Learning Centers, dissemination of materials).

Objective 1.6: Public school choice supports flexibility and family-community concerns.

Performance Indicators:

30. *By 2000, a minimum of 40 states will have charter school legislation.*
31. *By 2002, there will be 3,000 charter schools in operation around the nation.*
32. *By 2002, half of all school districts will make choice available to their students through magnet schools, charter schools, and open enrollment policies.*
33. *By 2002, 25% of all public school students in grades 3-12 will attend a school that they or their parents chose.*

Research on public schools that provide choice suggests that the sense of ownership by school staff, students, and parents helps to galvanize efforts towards common goals. Information on the educational effects of choice programs is limited; most charter schools are just getting started. Further work needs to be done on documenting the implementation and quality of public schools of choice and sharing the most promising strategies with the field.

The Department of Education is encouraging expansion of choice within the public school system with alternatives including magnet schools, charter schools, and systemwide strategies that make every public school a school of choice, thereby enabling all students and their parents to choose their school.

■ Magnet schools have provided the most widespread opportunity for families to exercise choice for several decades. The Department's Magnet School program provides support for magnet schools that are intended to achieve desegregation goals, particularly in our largest urban centers.

■ Charter schools are intended to give teachers, parents, and other members of local communities the flexibility to experiment with innovative methods of achieving educational excellence. At the same time, they should help all students receive access to quality schooling. Because they are new schools, charters require start-up funds and support that the Department helps to provide through its Charter School program.

Core Strategies:
- **Engage the public**. Expand support by the public and policymakers for the development of high-quality charter schools.
- **Financial support and technical assistance**.
  — Through the Charter Schools Grants program, help states and schools effectively plan and implement charter schools that have flexibility from state and district rules, are open to all students, and are held accountable for improving student achievement.
  — Continue to support implementation of magnet schools through grants to school districts under the Magnet Schools Program that provide opportunities and choice for students and promotes desegregation within high quality education settings.
- **Research and development**. Support research on public school choice, including evaluations of the effectiveness of charter schools and magnet schools, and promote the development of models and materials to assist parents, teachers, and communities to design effective school choice programs.
- **Outreach**. Disseminate information on strategies for expanding public school choice and share lessons learned from research on school choice.

Objective 1.7: Schools use advanced technology for all students and teachers to improve education.

Performance Indicators:
34. *All teachers and students will have modern multimedia computers in their classrooms by 2001.*
35. *The percentage of public school instructional rooms connected to the Information Superhighway will increase from 14% in 1996 to 25% in 1998, and an increasingly larger percentage thereafter.*
36. *At least 50% of teachers will integrate high-quality educational technology, high-quality software, and the Information Superhighway into their school curriculum for effective support of student learning by 2001.*
37. *Students in high poverty schools and students with disabilities will have access to advanced technology (including assistive technology for students with disabilities) that is comparable to that in other schools by the year 2001.*

Hundreds of studies have found that, when properly used, technology improves many aspects of education, including student learning, teacher professional development, classroom management, and school administration. As an instructional tool, technology helps students master basic skills, solve complex real-life problems that require advanced skills, and prepare for the world of work.

Few schools have adequate numbers of modern computers, and relatively few teachers are prepared to use technology effectively. Only a small percentage of classrooms currently have access to the Internet. However, not only access to computers and other technologies, but also integration of technology into the curriculum, are needed. We must create an infrastructure that will enable all students to leave school with the technology skills needed for work and further education. Finally, we must encourage development of software and universal design interfaces that make advanced technology fully accessible to students with disabilities.

Core Strategies:
- **Technology connections, especially for high-poverty schools**. Use the Federal Communications Commission's Universal Service Fund discounts, and "NetDays" to wire schools to use educational technology, connect every student and school to the Information Superhighway.
- **Modern computers, especially for high-poverty schools.** Encourage local, State, Federal and private sector partnerships to provide access to modern computers for all teachers and students. The Technology Innovation Challenge Fund will provide $425 million of funds for states and districts to plan, purchase and effectively use modern computers and other educational technology.
- **Effective software**. Using state and local standards as guides and building on research and development of effective practices, including those developed with support of the Technology Literacy Challenge Grants, work with the private sector to develop effective and engaging software and on-line learning resources as an integral part of school curriculum.
- **Professional development**. Building on new teaching standards, support teacher training through Federal programs such as the Eisenhower, Technological Literacy Challenge Fund, Star Schools, Bilingual Education, Vocational Education, and Title I programs. In partnership with states, local districts, and the private sector, create new incentives and approaches and provide technical assistance that will help teachers use technology more effectively.
- **Access to technology.** Provide financial support and technical assistance for development, dissemination, and use of assistive technology that enables students with disabilities to participate fully in education programs at all levels. Key programs include research by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research and support under the Assistive Technology program as well as IDEA state grants.

Goal 2. Build a solid foundation for learning.

In fostering the achievement of world-class student performance discussed in Goal 1, reform efforts need to focus on three main areas. First, reforms must promote family and community efforts to support children's early development and education, to ensure that all children have an appropriate preparation for school.

Second, reform efforts must identify what students will need to know and be able to do in core subject areas and effective strategies for improving instruction. Federal programs and national efforts across the nation must focus on enabling all students to master fundamental and advanced reading and math skills.

- Children need to be able to read independently and effectively by the end of third grade, to be able to apply reading to learning other subjects.

- Similarly acquiring mathematics skills and knowledge that prepare students for algebra, geometry and more advanced work is critical to student success in high school and beyond. In mathematics, the latest results from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study affirm that poor U.S. performance in the 8th grade is linked to mediocre content, lack of instructional rigor, and inadequate training and support for quality teaching.

Third, reform strategies must meet the diverse needs of the student population, so that all students —including limited-English proficient students, students with disabilities, migrant students, students in high-poverty schools, and any students at risk of not achieving the knowledge and skills required to achieve high state standards—receive the support and encouragement they need to succeed.

To address these three areas, the Department:

- Provides financial support to states and local school districts to help underwrite improvement.

- Will be offering for the first time voluntary, national tests in reading and math so that parents and communities will know how well their children and schools are performing in these two critical areas compared to those in other communities.

- Is implementing priority initiatives in reading and math to bring together resources throughout the Department as well as involve key partners in education and the business community in support.

Objectives, Indicators, and Strategies

Objective 2.1: All children enter school ready to learn.

Performance Indicators:
38. *By 2000, the majority of kindergarten and first grade teachers in low-income schools report that their students enter school with readiness skills for reading and math.*
39. *The percentage of 0- to 5-year-olds whose parents read to them or tell them stories regularly increases, as reported every three years by the National Household Education Survey.*
40. *The disparity in preschool participation rates between children from high-income families and children from low-income families declines continuously year by year.*

Recent research has highlighted the importance of the earliest years of life for children's later success. Children's early learning experiences, or lack of them, have consequences that extend into the long-term. Early brain development research reveals that if some learning experiences are not introduced to children at an early age, learning will be more difficult later. Furthermore, children who enter school ready to learn are more likely to achieve to high standards than children who are inadequately prepared. High-quality preschool and child care are integral in providing children with adequate preparation for school.

Core Strategies:
- **Interagency coordination and services integration**. Support children at risk of early school failure by coordinating with the Department of Health and Human Service's (HHS) Head Start, HHS' and Department of Agriculture's nutrition support programs, and other federal programs and services for young children to ensure full coverage of their needs and reduction of burden on families and schools to work with multiple providers.
- **Financial support for children who are educationally disadvantaged or with disabilities.** Provide resources to states and local school districts under Title I for preschool programs and to states and local providers under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for programs aimed at infants and toddlers and preschool children with disabilities or at risk of developing disabling conditions.
- **Research, development, and technical assistance**.
  — Identify and encourage the use of the latest research on early brain development, early intervention, and quality nurturing to programs that serve young children, and provide technical assistance to state and local agencies to apply appropriate findings.
  — Develop models of effective practice through such programs as Even Start that can be shared with projects funded under the Head Start, Title I preschool, and IDEA preschool program, and State and local programs.
  — Work with experts to develop an agreed-upon definition of school readiness and to establish a core set of standards that Even Start, Title I preschool, and IDEA programs will help children attain before entering school.
- **Development and dissemination of easy-to-use kits for learning at home**. Support family practices that encourage early learning by developing and disseminating educational materials for parents and their young children, such as the Ready*Set*Read Early Childhood Kit.
- **Development of readiness indicators**. Develop indicators of young children's knowledge and school readiness by working with HHS, other agencies, and organizations, incorporating measures from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study and other developmentally-appropriate studies of children's school readiness.

Objective 2.2: Every child reads independently by the end of the third grade.

Performance Indicators:
41. *All students achieve to the basic level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2002.*
42. *Increasing percentages of fourth graders will meet proficient and advanced levels in reading on NAEP.*
43. *At least 20 states implement the national reading test by 1999; all states implement the national reading test by 2002.*
44. *The America Reads Challenge legislation passes, and over a 3-year period starting in 1998, the corps prepares tutors for 3 million children.*
45. *Increasing percentages of teachers of kindergarten through third grade complete intensive professional development to enable them to skillfully teach reading.*
46. *At least 100,000 college work-study students tutor children in reading annually.*

In 1994, 40% of fourth grade students failed to attain the basic level of reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress and 70% did not attain the proficient level. Although reading problems are particularly severe for disadvantaged students, students with reading difficulties represent a cross-section of American children. More and more jobs require a high level of reading skill, indicating that all students will have to improve their reading skills.

The Department's existing programs already play a critical role in supporting the reading success of young children. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides reading services to millions of children each year. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and bilingual education funds under Title VII also support reading services for children. While teachers and schools have the critical responsibility for literacy, studies find that sustained individualized attention and tutoring after school and over the summer can raise reading levels when combined with parental involvement and quality school instruction.

Core Strategies:
- **Voluntary national test**. Support the development of a national, voluntary test in reading so that parents and communities have a benchmark for their children's progress.
- **Public information**. Build on the national test to provide information via the world wide web and other means to bring about an understanding of what it means to read independently and share strategies that teachers, parents, and others can use to help students achieve this goal.
- **Financial support for children with special needs**. Strengthen the Department's existing programs to provide in-class reading instruction with upgraded standards and curriculum—especially for children in kindergarten through third grade. Key programs that support reading instruction for young children include Title and Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Even Start.
- **Community partnerships**. Encourage community partnerships that sponsor reading tutors, through the America Reads Challenge, Read*Write*Now, Parents as First Teachers grants, and college work-study programs.
- **Research and development**. Support state of the art research through the new reading center, grant competitions, and other programs throughout the Department to develop, disseminate, and encourage the use of the most promising approaches to reading instruction and tutoring, particularly for students experiencing difficulty with reading.
- **Evaluation and performance measurement.** Through evaluation studies and support to improve state and local performance data systems, provide useful information on how states and communities are doing in improving children's reading. This feedback should guide policy makers and states on areas of success and need for improvement.

Objective 2.3: Every eighth grader masters challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry.

Performance Indicators:
47. *At least 20 states implement the national math test by 1999; all states by 2002.*
48. *More eighth graders reach the basic level or higher levels of proficiency in math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress: at least 60% will score at the international median by 2002; at least 15% will be in the top 10% internationally by 2002.*
49. *Each year, more new teachers enter the workforce with adequate preparation to teach challenging mathematics to students in kindergarten through eighth grade.*
50. *Each year, more teachers in grades 5-8 complete intensive professional development to enable them to teach challenging mathematics.*
51. *By 1998, schools have access to and use information on best practices for math instruction through technical assistance from their districts, states, and ED regional labs, comprehensive centers, the Eisenhower Consortium, and other sources.*

Mathematics is a basic skill—the gateway to learning many more advanced skills, the language of technology and science, a tool for analysis and problem solving, and a prerequisite for success in a wide variety of careers. Leading employers emphasize the need for U.S. students to excel in quantitative and problem-solving skills in order to succeed in the workplace. Math, like reading, has a key academic turning point. For math this occurs around eighth grade. In eighth grade, students are often put on different tracks that follow them through high school and even beyond, and often it is math that determines what that track will be.

Notwithstanding math's importance, U.S. students fail to learn and achieve to the high standards needed for math success. The recent Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) showed that, while US. 4th grade students perform above the international average in math, by 8th grade U.S. students scored below the international average. The study showed that we do not expect students to master material as challenging as students in high-performing nations do. Further, U.S. teachers instruct students differently than those high-performing nations.

Core Strategies:
- **Voluntary national test**. Support the development of a national, voluntary test in math so that parents and communities have a benchmark for their children's progress. Use the test as a means of encouraging schools, districts, states, business, and communities to move toward improving math curriculum, instruction, instructional materials, teacher training, and professional development.
- **Professional development programs**. Strengthen the Department's existing programs that support teacher preparation and upgrading teacher skills for math instruction—especially for teachers of fourth through eighth grade—such as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Eisenhower Professional Development program, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Professional Development program, and others.
- **Challenging standards**. Promote upgraded standards and curriculum for math instruction through Goals 2000, the Eisenhower Professional Development program, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and by working with the National Science Foundation.
- **Public information.** Increase public understanding and support of mastering challenging mathematics by the end of eighth grade through partnerships with key education, mathematics, and professional organizations; further collaborative activity with the National Science Foundation; and concrete information about what students should be able to do in mathematics.
- **Dissemination of effective practices**. Based on state-of-the-art research, develop high quality materials on effective practices and tools for improving math curriculum, professional development,

software, instruction, and family and community support; widely disseminate these materials; and promote the use of these materials by states, schools, teachers, and families.

Objective 2.4: Special populations receive appropriate services and assessments consistent with high standards.

Performance Indicators:
52. *States will implement appropriate procedures for assessing students who have disabilities, are limited English proficient, or are children of migrant workers, by 2001.*
53. *The number of schools using comprehensive, research-based approaches to improve curriculum and instruction and support services for at-risk students annually increases.*
54. *Administrators and educators working with at-risk children have access to and use high-quality information and technical assistance on effective practices provided by Department-sponsored technical assistance and research centers as well as through professional associations and publications.*
55. *Bilingual education and special education resources focus on improving the skills of school staff working with special populations.*
56. *Federal technical assistance and other support to states will result in annual increases in the number of states and local school districts with the capacity to disaggregate and report out assessment data aligned with standards for at-risk students.*

At-risk children need the same high quality schooling that is our goal for all students and additional supports to help them succeed. These children may include limited-English proficient students, students with disabilities, migrant students, students in high-poverty schools, and others who are the focus of federal programs. Federal support is critical to ensuring that these students are not left behind in the drive for higher standards. Serving the needs of at-risk children to enable them to reach the high standards expected of all students must figure prominently in reform efforts. Strategies must be based on the best research and promising practices from the field. Assessment of our nation's progress must be measured in terms of not only how well states, districts, and schools perform overall, but also in terms of how students at-risk fare.

Core Strategies:
- **Challenging standards in federal programs**. Work with states and districts to ensure that the standards set for students served by federal programs are the same challenging standards set for all children through providing technical assistance, guidance, and models of effective implementation of challenging standards.
- **Assessment with accommodations**. Promote the development of assessments aligned with high standards that make appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities and limited English proficiency.
- **Financial support**. Provide significant resources to states, local school districts, and other education providers to improve student achievement for children with special needs or assist states in providing education that meets civil rights requirements for free and appropriate education. The Department funds a number of programs aimed at disadvantaged children or children with disabilities, including:

  — Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (education for disadvantaged children)
  — Migrant education programs
  — Title I program for neglected and delinquent children
  — Programs for homeless children and youth
  — Indian education
  — Bilingual education
  — Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grants to states

- **Research, development, and technical assistance on promising practices**. Support and share research on the most promising practices through the research and development centers of the Department's Office of Education Research and Improvement (OERI), Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) and the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) to focus on strategies for teaching and assessing children with special needs. In

particular, provide technical assistance and information on including children with disabilities in the general curriculum in the least restrictive environment.

- **Professional development**. Support professional development that equips teachers with strategies to enable limited English proficient students and students with disabilities to meet challenging standards. Key programs include the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA) professional development program and professional development supported under the Bilingual Education Act, as well as professional development provided under the Title I program.

- **Evaluation and continuous improvement**.
    — Conduct evaluations of federally supported programs to determine the extent to which new program provisions support standards-based reforms and continuous improvement to help students meet challenging academic standards.
    — Use evaluations to inform continuous improvement of programs.

Goal 3. Ensure access to postsecondary education and lifelong learning.

Postsecondary education has been America's traditional gateway to the professions, more challenging jobs and higher wages. Graduates have been eagerly sought by business, government and education itself to resolve present problems and envision future opportunities. American postsecondary education has become world-class and foreign nations have sent thousands of their future leaders here for training. Even two years of postsecondary education pays off in future earnings and improved job opportunities.

Yet, although American higher education is the envy of the world, only about 62% of our own school graduates attend postsecondary education. Postsecondary enrollment and completion rates are significantly lower for blacks and Hispanics and for students of all backgrounds from the lowest economic quartile. Although enrollment rates have been rising in recent years, postsecondary education remains an elusive option for too many American high school graduates.

Although the college access problem involves many complex factors, three primary needs stand out: (1) more predictable financial assistance for all students who will consider postsecondary education; (2) better information about the costs and the academic requirements for attending postsecondary programs, and (3) a seamless mechanism for the delivery of postsecondary aid to students and institutions. To accomplish these:

- ED introduced a renewal application for financial aid applicants to provide an efficient way to update application information. Students only need tell us about changes in their circumstances instead of completely filling out a new application each year. This change substantially reduces burden and speeds the delivery of student aid funds to students.

- ED is introducing an online system that will allow students to apply for federal student aid on the Internet—the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). It will be available on June 30.

- ED's development of the national student loan data system allows ED to effectively manage student loans—borrowers in default cannot receive additional student aid funds and ED is able to track students' and institutions' performance in the aid programs.

- ED also reengineered the recertification process for institutions participating in the student aid programs. Instead of a large, cumbersome, imposing, and complex form, the new recertification application is shorter, simpler, and has been designed to meet the needs of the institutions.

- The proposal for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act will reflect the President's new tax proposals, minimize burden on institutions, and support the sharing of data with other agencies to further streamline the student aid process.

The federal government, working in cooperation with states and with postsecondary institutions, can overcome these large barriers that now make further education seem an unrealistic goal for too many of our high school graduates.

Finally, while resolving postsecondary enrollment and completion issues is critical to improving our national educational performance, we must also do more to encourage lifelong learning, whether it be graduate school or basic literacy skills, advanced technical training or job entry skills. This includes many for whom lifelong learning opportunities are of special importance such as disabled persons, adults lacking basic skills, and those whose job skills need upgrading or who require retraining.

Objectives, Indicators and Strategies

Objective 3.1: Postsecondary education is affordable for all Americans.

Performance Indicators:
57. *Considering all sources of financial aid, the percent of unmet need, especially for low income students, will show continuous decreases over time.*
58. *The gap in college participation between low- and high-income high school graduates will decrease each year.*
59. *Quality Control Reviews by ED's Inspector General will find that required institutional audits show increasing levels of quality each year.*
60. *Institutional compliance rates will show yearly increases over the baseline.*
61. *The rate at which adverse findings/determinations are sustained will show continuous yearly improvement over the baseline.*
62. *Cash management ratios for individual schools and the program as a whole will show continuous improvement on a yearly basis.*
63. *The cohort default rates for the Federal Family Education Loan and the Direct Loan Program will decline to a level of 10% or less and will remain stable or decline over time.*

Education increasingly determines who will prosper in our economy and who will not. Most of today's good jobs require more skills and training than a high school diploma can provide. Proof of the critical importance of postsecondary education is the large and growing economic return to education. Fifteen years ago a worker with a college degree made 38% more, on average, than a worker with a high school degree. Today, that difference is 73%.

Economic efficiency and fairness require that we make at least 2 years of postsecondary education as universally available as a high school diploma is now. Unfortunately, the cost of college limits access for many low- and middle-income families. The average cost of attending a public college increased from 9% of the typical family's income in 1979 to 14% in 1994. The Administration has proposed a comprehensive package of proposals—tax relief, increased grant aid and work-study assistance, and reduced borrowing costs—to help ensure that postsecondary education is affordable for all Americans.

Core Strategies:
- **New financial aid initiatives.** Provide financial support for postsecondary education to students and parents through the tax system by planning and implementing Hope Scholarships and deductions for tuition paid for postsecondary education.
- **Improvement and expansion of existing programs.** Improve existing Department programs to provide financial assistance for postsecondary education, including:
  — Pell Grant program
  — Campus-based loan programs (Supplemental Educational Opportunities Grants, Work-Study, and Perkins Loans)
  — Federal Family Education Loan Program
  — Direct Student Loan Program.
- **Improved stewardship of federal funds.** Ensure high-quality program management by institutions, agencies, and lenders through improved targeting and oversight.
- **High quality ED program management.** Provide effective program management to ensure that our federal student financial aid programs are efficiently administered and are cost-effective.

Objective 3.2: Students receive the information and support services they need to prepare for and complete postsecondary education.

Performance Indicators:

64. *By the year 2000, a majority of prospective students at age 12 and above and their parents will have an accurate assessment of the cost of attending college and the aid available for college.*
65. *The gap between the percent of low- and high-income students who graduate from a four-year and from a two-year college will show continuous decreases over time.*
66. *The percentage of middle/junior high and high school students who are aware of academic requirements for college or postsecondary vocational enrollment will increase each year.*
67. *Participants in the TRIO programs enroll in and complete postsecondary programs at rates higher than comparable non-participants.*

Research has shown that motivating students and families to anticipate and plan for college at an early age and providing students with needed non-financial supports are at least as important as financial assistance in getting students to attend and complete college. This is particularly true for low income students. However, research shows that, for many students, critical information and support are lacking.

The effects are serious. In 1995, among students whose families were in the bottom third of the income distribution in eighth grade, only 44% had attended a postsecondary institution within two years of graduating from high school. However, 88% of low income students who had taken a rigorous high school program had gone onto college. Providing students with the information and support they need to aspire to and be prepared for college is critical if we are going to increase college going rates for low income students. Similar supports are also needed to help ensure that students complete their postsecondary programs.

Core Strategies:

- **National campaign for middle school students.** Launch a national campaign to motivate middle school students, especially from low income families, and their parents to prepare for higher education by providing information on the benefits, academic requirements, and financial costs of attending higher education institutions. Use the organizations in the Partnership for Family Involvement to work through guidance counselors, community groups, and other organizations serving young people.
- **Comprehensive information for middle school students.** Motivate middle school students, particularly those from low income families, and their parents to begin preparing for higher education by providing information on the benefits, academic requirements, and financial costs of attending higher education institutions.
- **Sector coordination.** Provide incentives and guidance for increased coordination between K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions to ensure that students are ready for college.
- **Outreach and dissemination initiatives.** Enhance the effectiveness of the TRIO student support services program by improving outreach and dissemination efforts and by applying the latest research on effective strategies to assist disadvantaged students.
- **Financial support.** Provide federal support and technical assistance for secondary and higher education programs that aid students who are disadvantaged. Key programs include:
  - TRIO (postsecondary education outreach and student support programs for high schools and colleges, including Student Support Services, Upward Bound, Talent Search, Educational Opportunity Centers, McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement)
  - Aid for institutional development, including strengthening historically black colleges, universities, and graduate institutions and Hispanic-serving institutions, and tribally-controlled postsecondary vocational institutions.

Objective 3.3: All adults can strengthen their skills and improve their earning power throughout their lives.

Performance Indicators:
68. *By 2002, the literacy skills of American adults will improve as shown by significantly fewer adults performing at the lowest proficiency level on the National Adult Literacy Survey in 1992.*
69. *Increasing numbers of adults enrolled in beginning adult basic education programs and English as a second language programs will achieve proficiency in basic skills as measured by standardized tests.*
70. *The percentage of all persons exiting the vocational rehabilitation system after receiving services who obtain competitive employment will increase each year.*
71. *The percentage of individuals obtaining competitive employment who maintain employment and earnings 24 months after completion of vocational rehabilitation will increase significantly by 2002.*

For adults with disabilities or those who do not have a basic level of literacy proficiency, trying to earn a decent wage is a difficult task. While the adult education and vocational rehabilitation programs have successfully helped many adults to acquire the skills needed for better jobs and lives, too many adults have not received the help they needed to achieve those goals. For adult education participants, particularly in adult basic education, national data has shown that too few adults stay in the program long enough to receive a substantial benefit. Moreover, the research on effective programs is very limited.

In addition to those needing adult basic education, there is a large adult population that will hold many different kinds of jobs during their careers. Some will need to upgrade their skills and some will need to be retrained for entirely new jobs. Providing educational opportunities to these adult workers will lengthen their productive years and will also benefit the economy by creating a more flexible and more highly trained workforce.

Core Strategies:
- **Financial support.** Provide grants to aid states in carrying out adult education and rehabilitation programs (Adult Education State Grants and Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants).
- **Access to quality adult education.** Expand the availability of high quality adult basic and secondary education to all adults lacking the necessary skills and credentials by encouraging the appropriate use of distance learning and other technologies and by coordinating with job training programs that integrate academic and workplace learning.
- **"What works" for adult education students.** Through research by the National Center on Adult Learning and Literacy and effectiveness evaluations conducted by the Planning and Evaluation Service, identify and validate effective adult basic education and English as a second language practices and disseminate study findings in formats that are accessible to a wide audience.
- **Sound program management.** Establish benchmarks for adult education performance systems that indicate the levels of expected performance from effective programs.
- **Adult education an integral component of reformed welfare systems.** Strengthen the role of adult education in the new welfare-to-work systems by providing technical assistance to states and local programs on models for integrating work readiness activities into the basic skills delivery system.
- **Linking indicators with high quality performance measurement systems.** Work with states to improve the state performance measurement systems in the vocational rehabilitation program in order to ensure progress toward performance indicators and identify areas for technical assistance.
- **Best practices.** Assist individuals with disabilities to achieve desired employment outcomes by identifying and disseminating information regarding best practices.
- **Interagency coordination.** Encourage coordination between state vocational rehabilitation agencies and State-level job training programs by awarding grants for system change.

Goal 4. Make ED a high-performance organization by focusing on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction.

The heart of the Government Performance and Results Act is its focus on the results of federal activities and funding. For Department of Education organizations and staff to become "results-driven," we must:

- Identify our customers and meet their needs.
- Set goals and establish or improve performance measurement systems to track progress and give feedback for improvement.
- Determine how best to work with our partners in the education system—states, local districts, institutions of higher education, financial institutions, research institutions, non-profit organizations—to reach program goals.
- Continually seek new ways to provide services more efficiently and with higher quality.
- Support R&D and evaluation studies to identify best practices in education and the ways they can be applied by states, local communities, higher education institutions, and the Department itself.

During the past few years, we have made much progress in transforming ED into a high performance organization, as noted earlier in the introduction.

We are doing more with fewer staff and fewer supervisory layers. The Department is ahead of schedule in reaching the 12% staff reductions called for by President Clinton.

Key management processes have been reinvented—including the regulatory process and grants management—and efforts are underway to improve virtually all parts of our administrative processes. For example, we have worked to reduce regulatory burden, eliminating over 600 pages of regulations while expanding flexibility through ED-flex demonstrations which give up to 12 states broad authority to waive federal requirements. Reinvention of our discretionary grants process cut the number of separate steps by 55%.

We started cross-cutting teams for providing technical assistance and auditing, to work with our state and local partners before problems result in crises and the need for heavy-handed federal intervention. Our research agency was reorganized to support key priorities and for better focus on customer service.

The Department's first strategic plan was published December 1994, and work is underway to develop performance plans for our key programs. Evaluations have been aligned with the strategic plan and the individual program plans developed so far.

But more remains to be done. The objectives in Goal 4 identify critical management processes for the Department that need ongoing attention or further development.

Objectives, Indicators, and Strategies

Objective 4.1: Our customers receive fast, seamless service and dissemination of high-quality information and products.

Performance Indicators:
72. *By 2000, all customers, internal and external, will agree that ED products, services, and information, including those on the Department's web site, are of high quality, timely, and accessible.*
73. *Department employees and front-line service centers meet or exceed established customer service standards.*
74. *Quarterly evaluation reports for the "One-Pubs" system, based on quality assurance surveillance, indicate that high standards of performance are achieved for dissemination of ED's information products.*

A person with a question is someone who needs help, not busy signals and unreturned phone messages. Customer service isn't just a slogan, it is a necessary focus of our organization. We believe that customers should have seamless access to information and services and are striving to meet the standards we have set for customer service. The Department relies on input from customers to improve our programs and services and has sought out feedback which has led to significant improvements in the way we do business.

Core Strategies:
- **Standards.** Set, meet and exceed customer service standards, especially on the front lines by providing employee training, regular feedback on performance, adequate resources, equipment, and incentives.
- **One-stop-shopping for customers.** Create and continuously improve a "one-stop shop" for Department information products, including use of a performance-based contract.
- **Public outreach.** Conduct outreach activities to increase awareness and support for the Secretary's priorities among key constituency groups and the general public, using regional meetings and events, teleconferences, newsletters, targeted mailings, national conferences, satellite town meetings, information services via the Internet, and contacts with state and local governments and other federal agencies.
- **Full access.** Ensure that customers with disabilities have access to ED services and information by expanding our TTY system capacity and establishing an alternate format center to provide both braille and audiotape.
- **Employee resources.** Provide ED employees with technology needed to respond effectively to customer requests.

See Appendix A (page 41) for the Department's customer service standards.

Objective 4.2: Our partners have the support and flexibility they need without diminishing accountability for results.

Performance Indicators:
75. *States and school districts rate the Department's technical assistance, including assistance from the integrated reviews, as very useful in improving their performance.*
76. *By 2002, the number of separate ED programs will decline significantly from the current 197 in FY 1997.*
77. *Customers increasingly report that they have greater flexibility and report better understanding of ED rules.*
78. *New discretionary grants processed using the re-engineered grant-making process are awarded each year on a timely basis.*
79. *Reports from program monitoring teams and audit reports under the Single Audit Act show a reduction in significant recurring findings as a result of state participation in the Cooperative Audit Resolution and Oversight Initiative.*

Many ED programs serve similar target populations—for example, educationally disadvantaged children, although each program has a different focus and purposes. To improve teaching and learning for these children, the Department needs to be organized to promote the integration of federal programs with each other as well as with state and local programs.

Two important coordinated reviews are providing states with single contacts, coordinated guidance, and straightforward conflict resolution processes rather than multiple reviews. The Integrated Review Team initiative promotes joint technical assistance and monitoring activities among several offices and programs that are working with the same or greatly overlapping target populations or education providers. The Cooperative Audit Resolution and Oversight Initiative links program, auditing, and legal staffs with state program administrators to resolve financial issues. These new processes promote cooperative, rather than adversarial, relationships between the Department and our grantees.

Further, to better support our partners and ensure that the taxpayer gets results for their investment, we need to continue improving the key processes and systems supporting federal aid to education. Some of our legislative authorities will need revision to support the Government Performance and Results Act's focus on results. To make regulations helpful to achieving program goals and accountability, they should be as flexible and performance-oriented, and impose as little burden, as possible. The reengineered grants process will provide the grantee community one point of contact, more time to make proposals, and more technical assistance before and after grant awards.

Core Strategies:
- **Integrated program reviews.** Establish and implement a protocol for conducting grant program reviews that integrate program monitoring, technical assistance, and audit resolutions through a collaborative approach among program offices and with states.
- **Technical assistance system.**
  — Create a conceptual and operational framework for delivering technical assistance through technical assistance centers, conferences, integrated reviews, ED staff, and online services.
  — Link technical assistance, monitoring and auditing activities by providing the Integrated Review Teams with results of Cooperative Audit Resolutions, and other audit findings.
- **Program streamlining.** During reauthorization, simplify legislation and design programs to be results-oriented.
- **Regulatory/legislative reinvention.**
  — Ensure appropriate flexibility, consistent with customer recommendations, program goals, and need for accountability in new legislation and regulations.

— Set forth clear, straightforward expectations and options through simpler regulations and more timely, effective guidance.

— In particular, develop postsecondary education reauthorization legislation that results in regulations and program operation guidelines that are straightforward and simplified for easier customer use.

- **Grants re-engineering.** Ensure that the re-engineered decentralization of the discretionary grant-making process is operational by tracking output, closely monitoring developments to overcome roadblocks, and by providing comprehensive desk-level procedures and training for staff.

- **Timely grant awards.** Ensure that formula and discretionary grants are issued to our partners in time for state and local program planning and operations, by requiring that program offices award grants by May 1 wherever beneficial to grantees.

Objective 4.3: An up-to-date knowledge base is available from education research to support education reform and equity.

Performance Indicators:
80. *Peer reviews show that education research and statistics supported by the Department are of high quality, are focused on critical education reform issues, and contribute significantly to educational improvement.*
81. *Education research meets the needs of our partners (e.g., states, schools, institutions of higher education, national associations) and our customers (teachers, parents, students, business) for reliable information on how to make schools more effective, as measured by biennial customer surveys.*
82. *Department programs and policies are based on sound research results.*

Investing in education research and evaluation contributes to our understanding of and efforts to improve education. Research and evaluation expands understanding of fundamental aspects of human development, learning, teaching, and schools and their environmental contexts. It points the way to effective elements of curriculum, instruction, and school organization. It provides the best basis for distinguishing worthwhile program and policies from fads. It helps educators assess the status of education systems and their progress toward various goals.

Because of its potential to influence the well-being of the nation's youth, education research must meet the highest professional standards of scientific inquiry so that results are trustworthy. To ensure its relevance and application, research must remain firmly rooted in the everyday experience of students and teachers and the reality of schools. The Department supports a variety of national dissemination activities that make available to educators, parents, and policymakers the best research-based information on educational practice.

Core Strategies:
- **Statistics.** Collect statistics annually on critical education issues used to inform the national research agenda and provide information for policy making and program improvement. The National Center for Education Statistics is one of the federal government's major statistical agencies.
- **National vision and priorities for research.**
  — Develop a comprehensive vision of the nation's needs for knowledge about education, and set clear priorities for education research to meet those needs.
  — Coordinate research, development, and evaluation activities across the Department to optimize the use of R&D funds for the priorities.
- **Dissemination.** Develop and implement a comprehensive dissemination system of effective practices that increases the education community's access and use of research-based products and services for education reform and improvement.
- **Financial support for R&D that supports national research priorities.** Through work supported by the national education research institutes, regional educational laboratories, National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research, the new Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Research to Practice program, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, and the International Education and Foreign Language Studies program, the Department supports research into education reform and improvement.
- **Feedback to ED staff.** Ensure that research findings and results of program evaluations are given to program offices to improve program design and implementation.
- **Research standards.** Ensure that Department-supported research and development meet the professional standards of the scientific community and are applied systematically and with rigor.
- **International benchmarks.** Develop and utilize knowledge about education systems and practices in other nations to stimulate educational improvement in the United States.

Objective 4.4: Our information technology investments are sound and used to improve impact and efficiency.

Performance Indicators:
83. All computers and information systems will be Year 2000 compliant, when necessary, by 1999.
84. At least 90% of all employees assess productivity as "significantly improved" as a result of available technology, as shown by the employee survey in 2000.
85. All Information Technology Review Board assessments will show that major information systems are mission-driven, cost effective, consistent with our information technology architecture, and supported by performance-based contracts.
86. The percentage of federal student aid applications transmitted through the Internet will increase annually, resulting in higher accuracy and reduced processing costs.
87. Users will express high satisfaction with the student loan data system and the new Easy Access for Students and Institutions (EASI) system.
88. Data reporting burden on the public will be reduced by five percent annually.

The Department's information systems, consisting of data, software, hardware, and telecommunications, will be integrated and promote cost effectiveness and efficiency. Employees will access ED's reliable local and wide area network from standards-based workstations using modern, accessible, personal productivity software and hardware tools. Management of the data and systems processes will be closer to the user. Data warehousing will allow information to be shared among internal and external customers with increasing ease and with adequate security precautions, including issues related to privacy and confidentiality.

Through the construction of a Education Community Data Model, the Department's data requirements will be identified and used to develop a departmental information architecture. This model and architecture will be designed so that redundancy is eliminated for new information systems, data will be captured once—where and when it is needed—and easily used by internal and external customers. The Internet web will provide increased public access to ED information and for processing business transactions electronically.

Core Strategies:
- **Year 2000 compliance.** Implement a major Departmental effort to become "Year 2000 data compliant" to ensure that ED's data users and customers are not affected from data corruption resulting from hardware and software that cannot correctly process date-related information.
- **Network and PC infrastructure for the Department.** Ensure that the Department has a cost effective, efficient, accessible, and reliable network infrastructure, with modern workplace software and hardware, to promote productivity and meet business needs.
- **ED Internet World Wide Web support.** Provide a robust, reliable, secure Internet World Wide Web service that effectively presents and distributes quality educational information and processes business transactions for our internal and external customers.
- **Cost effective major systems that deliver for ED and its customers.** Assess current and proposed major information systems—such as student financial aid systems (OPE), educational and statistical systems (NCES), and financial systems (EDCAPS)—to ensure that they efficiently meet the business needs and mission of the Department. The Information Technology Board will review new information technology investment proposals, conduct periodic reviews of on-going systems and expand the use of performance-based contracting. In particular—
  - **Project EASI (Easy Access for Students and Institutions).** Implement an integrated delivery system for all participants in student financial aid delivery. The system will provide individual information for students and their families on participation and eligibility for all aid programs as well as summary profiles on students, schools, lending institutions, and federal and state programs.

— **Student loan information system.** Ensure that the Department has an up-to-date, easily accessible, and very reliable record system on student financial aid recipients by implementing performance-based contracting and system enhancements.
— **Data warehousing.** Develop a Department-wide information collection and dissemination system using a data warehouse to provide easy access to ED data and eliminate data duplication.

Objective 4.5: The Department is a learning organization with high-performing employees.

Performance Indicators:
89. *By 2002, ED staff FTEs will total 4,495, an 11% decrease from 1993, while sustaining high quality service and productivity.*
90. *Peer review of the quality of Department-sponsored employee training shows that the training is among the best in the federal government and is comparable to the best in the private sector.*
91. *By 2000, most employees and managers, as needed, obtain assistance from knowledgeable, courteous staff on resolving employee disputes, and the disputes are closed quickly and informally whenever possible.*
92. *By 2000, at least 70% of ED employees agree that the multi-evaluator General Performance Appraisal System (GPAS) improves individual employee performance and development, and aligns employee goals with the overall mission of the Department.*
93. *By 2000, most employees indicate satisfaction with their work environment (e.g., physical surroundings, noise level, air quality), security, and accessibility.*

High-performing organizations are characterized by workers who understand and support the mission of the organization in which they work. Individuals are valued as contributors to the organization mission; and high-performing organizations provide continuous learning opportunities and flexible work arrangements, to the extent possible. Over the next 3–5 years, the Office of Management will provide leadership in (1) expanding the capacity of employees to perform the mission of the Department, and (2) providing the best possible working conditions to support the Department's mission.

The results of the Department's 1996 Employee Survey highlighted the need for additional work on transforming the Department into a high-performing organization. For example, a significant number of employees do not believe poor performers are dealt with effectively, and dissatisfaction continues with the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's dispute resolution processes. In addition, the survey also identified a perceived inequity between services, including training and facilities, for employees in the regions versus headquarters. Strategies and performance measures have been developed to help make improvements in these areas and to assess whether recent innovations, including the multi-input performance appraisal system, and other innovations have yielded intended results in increased productivity or morale.

Core Strategies:
- **Ensuring high staff performance.**
  — Continue to streamline the hiring process.
    — Provide meaningful training and development opportunities to all employees consistent with identified needs.
  — Assess whether the redesigned employee performance appraisal system is effective in promoting desired employee performance and employee development.
- **A fair, efficient, and responsive workplace**. Continue to re-engineer the Department's equal employment opportunity (EEO) operations and assess progress to date on the newly implemented Informal Dispute Resolution Center.
- **A healthy, safe, secure and accessible workplace for all employees**. Move headquarters employees back to renovated quarters and make improvements to other department offices or relocate staff to improved quarters.

Objective 4.6: Management of our programs and services ensures financial integrity.

> *Performance Indicators:*
> 94. *By 1998, the Education Central Automated Processing System (EDCAPS) will be fully implemented and providing assistant secretaries, the Chief Financial Officer, and program managers with consistent, timely, and reliable financial and program information, through an assessment by the Information Technology Board.*
> 95. *Evaluation of contracts will indicate that better than fully successful performance, including quality, cost control, timeliness, and other factors, is being received by the government and the taxpayer.*
> 96. *Auditors issue a clean opinion on the Department-wide annual financial statements every year.*
> 97. *The Department's fund control system and staff continue to prevent anti-deficiency violations, while ensuring timely awards of grants and contracts and maximizing the use of available budget resources.*

We must ensure that taxpayer dollars are used effectively as intended by the Administration and Congress, and that fraud, waste and abuse is at a minimum. To obtain reliable results, systems must be in place to provide reliable and timely information. The Education Department's Central Automated Processing System (EDCAPS)—currently in development—will satisfy that need.

For the past four years, we have received disclaimers of audit opinions because of our auditor's concerns with the integrity of the data supporting our cost estimates for the Federal Family Education Loan Program. We will not be satisfied with financial management and program accountability in this Department until we receive consistently unqualified audit opinions.

Also, over the past four years, the Department has worked hard to improve management and delivery of federal student financial assistance, yielding significant achievements such as the successful implementation of the Direct Loan program and the dramatic increase in collections on defaulted loans. We are committed to building on these accomplishments through Project EASI (Easy Access for Students and Institutions), a high-profile effort to streamline and integrate the systems used to deliver financial aid to students and institutions.

Core Strategies:
- **Centralized core data.**
  — Provide timely and reliable information to program offices to help them manage their programs (EDCAPS)
  — Continue to convert funds control system and processes to the EDCAPS environment to prevent unlawful expenditure of funds.
- **Performance-based contracting, reduced outsourcing.** Control costs by implementing performance-based contracting and by repatriating work contracted out where effective and where possible within FTE ceilings.
- **Financial integrity.** Enhance the Department's credibility by obtaining a clean audit opinion on annual financial statements.
- **Staff skills.** Provide training and incentives for both financial and program staff to acquire core financial management competencies.

Objective 4.7: All levels of the agency meet the Results Act goal to become fully performance-driven.

Performance Indicators:
98. *Employees recognize the strategic plan as meaningful and understand how their work supports achieving the plan's goals and objectives.*
99. *Senior leadership and managers' reviews of performance indicator data result in appropriate follow-up actions.*
100. *Independent assessments verify that all large and selected other ED programs have comprehensive, high-quality performance measurement systems that are used for program improvement and accountability by 1999.*
101. *By 1999, all ED program managers assert that the data used for their program's performance measurement are reliable and valid, or have remedial plans.*
102. *Managers agree that policy, budget, and resource allocation decisions are aligned with the strategic priorities of the Department.*

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA, or "the Results Act") provides the Department with strong support and guidance for new ways of operating and improving our programs. The Act's focus on results affects all aspects of an organization and its operations—drafting legislation and regulations, ensuring program quality and financial integrity, employee appraisals and assessment, program performance measurement, and more. Two critical elements in this process are:
- Developing strategic plans—agency-wide and for individual programs—to lay on the line our understanding of what we are to accomplish and how we know that we've succeeded.
- Establishing or improving performance measurement systems and evaluations that provide high-quality performance information on the results of our efforts and what is needed to improve.

When orienting our program management to focus on results, it is important to consider the specific context in which we carry out our mission. The Department operates in a broad, multi-level system of education providers and community interests when carrying out its programs and policy initiatives. Program outcomes for education are almost always the joint results of state, local, institutional, and federal efforts, rather than of federal programs acting in isolation.

Core Strategies:
- **Agency performance on strategic plan and program indicator plans**.
  — Track and give feedback on implementation of plans.
  — Provide a report card on overall agency performance as well as that of individual offices.
- **Collaboration with partners**. Actively involve our education partners in development and implementation of the strategic plan and program performance plans.
- **Performance measurement.**
  — Ensure that key program activities in the Department are subject to periodic, high-quality performance measurement, ranging from meaningful, accurate grantee performance reports to independent evaluations and customer surveys.
  — Improve local grantee performance measurement systems through disseminating models, technical assistance, and legislative and regulatory changes.
  — Develop standards of successful performance for key processes and programs by 1999.
- **Evaluation**. Align evaluations to support the strategic plan and program performance plans.
- **Budget and resources alignment.**
  — Establish annual budget priorities linked to federal and Department priorities.
  — Align resources to support the Department's strategic and annual plans.

- **ED manager/staff supports for performance management**. Strengthen performance measurement skills of ED managers and staff through training and internal technical assistance; and make available technology for data analysis and reporting and for communicating internally and externally.

Resources

An estimated distribution of current Department of Education appropriations and staffing resources to the goals of this plan will be provided once the framework of goals and objectives is agreed upon. In addition, while some of our programs are targeted directly at a particular objective, others support more than one objective. A table associating key programs with objectives will be included once the framework is agreed upon.

Relationship of Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives to Annual Performance Goals

This section will be completed once the annual plan is prepared. In many cases, progress towards targets set in the performance indicators for the strategic plan will become annual goals. However, in addition, intermediate indicators and targets, as well as activity milestones, will be developed to produce a meaningful annual performance plan.

Key External Factors that Could Affect Achievement of ED's Goals and Objectives

Although the Department's plan is predicated upon partnerships with state and local education agencies, public and private postsecondary education institutions, and financial institutions to achieve its mission of education quality and access, some factors are largely outside the scope of this joint partnership for learning. These external factors include:

- **Effects from an economic downturn.**
  — Declines in State and local school tax revenues would affect their ability to serve growing enrollments from the baby-boom echo as well as implement needed education reforms.
  — Postsecondary enrollments often rise during downturns, requiring additional funding resources.
  — Tuition cost increases affect student loan and grant requirements.
  — Student loan defaults go up during recessions, when graduates lose jobs or are unable to find jobs. Higher interest rates increase costs to students for their student loans.

- **Actions by individual families critical to education, especially early learning.** The ability to reach all families about the importance of learning during the important early years of life, which new brain research is showing to be critical to future intellectual development.

- **State capacity for implementation of standards.** States and communities continuing to establish and be held accountable for high academic standards, even where these standards are initially very tough for a significant fraction of the students to meet.

- **Local schools' capacity for improvement.** The willingness of school systems to undertake long-term investment in staff professional development and other capacity building activities in order to produce effective teaching and learning of the new and demanding education course work.

- **American society's tolerance for drug and alcohol use.** Changes in the social tolerance for drugs and alcohol use as a countervailing influence to prevention activities of schools and educators.

- **Other social supports for disadvantaged children and families.** The ability to reinforce education reforms in high-risk communities through improved opportunities for low income children in health care, recreation and safe and drug-free environments.

- **Business community's support for education.** The willingness of employers to undertake effective school-to-work partnerships and to reinforce learning by relating hiring to student school performance.

Program Evaluations

The Department's Planning and Evaluation Service is coordinating evaluation activities to provide valid and reliable information for performance measurement. When the plan is completed and indicators settled upon—following consultations with Congress and stakeholders as well as deeper consultation within the Department—detailed descriptions of supporting evaluations will be attached. Currently, the appendix to this plan lists data sources, including evaluations and major statistics and assessment projects, along with sample indicator data where available.

Comment on the strategic plan's indicators. Although not required by the Results Act, the Department has included performance indicators in this plan, some of which are provided by evaluations (see indicator data sources and sample indicator data in the appendix). As we prepared this plan, it became evident that appropriate indicators of performance were not always readily available. Also, while we have current data sources (underway or planned) for most of our proposed indicators, in some cases baseline or benchmark data are not yet available, making it difficult to set targets for improvement. As we implement this plan and establish or revise data sources, the set of indicators will become increasingly specific and focused.

Program evaluations, statistical studies, and assessments

Examples of existing or planned evaluation and assessment strategies to provide sound performance measurement through program evaluation include:

- Systematic collection of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary student outcome data using federal and state statistical sources. *(National Assessment of Educational Progress; National Postsecondary Student Aid Study; Department of Labor's National Longitudinal Study of Youth)*

- Much wider use of customer surveys. *(Federal Direct Student Loan Program Evaluation; Longitudinal Survey of Schools)*

- Peer reviews of the quality of Department-funded research, development, and program improvement programs and products. (*Evaluation of the Regional Education Labs*)

- Impact evaluations using time-series design or experimental design (random assignment/control group methodology) to provide comparative information on program effectiveness and to help identify "what works." *(Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance; Evaluation of the TRIO Upward Bound program; National Evaluation of the School-to-Work Program; Evaluation of Effective Adult Basic Education Programs)*

- Strengthened program evaluation guidance and assistance to program office staff and to grantees to facilitate the reporting and use of sound program information. (*Guide to Program Outcome Measurement for the U.S. Department of Education; Title I Parent Compact Guide*)

The Department is also taking steps to ensure that evaluations and performance measurement avoid data duplication and meet high standards of data quality.

- **Internal collaboration.**
  — In 1996, the Department established a Data Coordination Committee reporting to the Deputy Secretary with representatives from all offices. Its mission is to review, with key partners such as state education agencies, data quality, burden, and duplication issues.

— Under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary, the Planning and Evaluation Service, Budget Service, and National Center for Educational Statistics are working collaboratively to review program performance indicators for content, methodology, and quality of data sources.

- **Other federal agencies.** Program offices have worked with evaluation and statistics agencies in other federal departments—for example, using Health and Human Services' Monitoring the Future survey for data useful for drug prevention, the National Science Foundation's data on minority participation in science and engineering, and Labor's National Longitudinal of Youth for school to work.

- **ED's Inspector General.** The Inspector General will be conducting independent reviews of the quality and reliability of the Department's performance measures.

Appendix A: Department of Education's Customer Service Standards

Department of Education's Customer Service Standards
(Issued June 1996)

If you contact us with an inquiry about the Department of Education or ask for other information:
- We will answer your written inquiry within 15 working days.
- If you telephone us, you will speak to a knowledgeable person who will answer your question or refer it properly. You will receive no more than two referrals.
- We will answer phone calls promptly, within three rings, and return all voice-mail messages within 48 hours.
- We will respond to your e-mail messages within 48 hours.
- If you have a personal appointment with a Department Employee, you will not be kept waiting.

If you request one of our publications or documents:
- Requests for single copies of publications by telephone will be sent within 48 hours.
- Request for single copies by mail and all bulk orders will be filled within 72 hours.
- Publications and documents will be made available in alternative formats on request.
- We will give you the option to receive information in electronic form where possible.

If you contact us about a complaint:
- We will respond to written complaints within 15 working days.
- If you telephone us with a complaint, we will advise you on the telephone or refer your complaint to the proper source.

If you are a prospective grant applicant or existing grantee, or if you are a prospective or current recipient of student of student financial assistance:
- We will disseminate timely and accurate information on grant opportunities and provide clear guidelines for grant proposals and criteria for selection.
- We will disseminate timely and accurate information on student financial aid application procedures and program provisions.
- We will acknowledge receipt of requests for administrative actions and other inquiries within 48 hours.
- Final response on administrative actions will be completed in 30 calendar days.
- Grant award documents will clearly identify which requests should be referred to the grant specialist or program specialist and which grantee actions do not require approval.
- We will provide timely, accurate, and dependable technical assistance.
- We will provide information that explains the final funding decision.
- We will institute sensible reporting requirements and, when conducting monitoring and site visits, perform exit interviews and make final monitoring reports available within 30 days.

Appendix B: Indicators, Preliminary Examples of Baseline Data, and Data Sources

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	**Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)**
End Outcome Indicators			
	1. Increasing percentages of all students will meet or exceed basic, proficient, and advanced performance levels in reading, math and other core subjects on such measures as the National Assessment of Educational Progress and state assessments aligned with challenging standards.	• *60% of 4th graders, 70% of 8th graders, and 75% of 12th graders scored at or above the basic level in reading in 1994 (National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1994).* • *64% of 4th graders, 62% of 8th graders, and 69% of 12th graders scored at or above the basic level in mathematics in 1996 (NAEP, 1996).*	• NCES: National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading, biennially, 1996 • NAEP Math, biennially, 1998 • State Assessments
	2. Students in high-poverty schools will show continuous improvement in reaching proficiency levels comparable to that for the nation.	• *32% of 4th graders from families with low educational attainment scored at least at the basic proficiency level in reading compared to 70% of children with college-graduate parents. (NAEP, 1994).* • *39 % of low-income 8th graders scored at least basic proficiency in mathematics compared to 71% of other 8th graders (NAEP, 1996).*	• NAEP Reading, biennially, 1996 • NAEP Math, biennially, 1998
	3. High school attendance and graduation will increase, particularly in high-poverty schools and among students with disabilities and others at risk of school failure to a national goal of 90% by 2000.	• *Children from poor families were three times more likely to drop out of high school than other children (Dropout Rates in the United States, 1993).*	• U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, annual • NCES: annual Common Core of Data surveys and National Education Longitudinal Study
	4. The percentage of high school graduates completing at least three years of science and three years of math will increase 10 percent between 1996 and 2000.	• *In 1994, 51 percent of all high school graduates took at least three years of science and three years of math. (Condition of Education, 1996)* • *Baseline data for 1996 high school graduates in School to Work systems is currently being collected.*	• Changes in math-science course-taking to be measured from transcripts collected for high school graduates of 1996, 1998 and 2000.
	5. Increasing numbers of high school students complete advanced placement courses.	• *83 out of 1,000 11th and 12th grade students in 1996 received passing scores on Advanced Placement (AP) exams (The College Board--AP, 1996).*	• The College Board--AP, annually

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Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	6. Students in high-poverty schools served by federal programs will show comparable increases in completion of challenging course work, including advanced placement courses, that will enable them to pursue higher education or other options.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• National Longitudinal Study of Youth (possibly)

Goal 1: Help all students reach challenging academic standards so that they are prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
1.1 States develop challenging standards and assessments for all students in the core academic subjects.	7. By 1998, all states have challenging content and performance standards in place for two or more core subjects.	• *33 states report content standards in 2 or more core subjects. (CCSSO, 1996)* • *22 states report performance standards in 2 or more core subjects. (CCSSO, 1996)* • *15 states have been assessed by the AFT as having standards that are clear, specific and well-grounded in content. (American Federation of Teachers, 1996)* • *An independent, expert panel found that math and/or science curriculum frameworks documents from six states (out of nine states reviewed) had many high quality characteristics, including reflecting the influence of the national standards.*	• Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSS0), annual, 1997-2002 • Goals 2000 Annual Reports, 1997-2002 • Baseline State Survey, Planning and Evaluation Service, 1997 • American Federation of Teachers, 1997 • Eisenhower State Curriculum Frameworks Evaluation, Planning and Evaluation Service, 1997
	8. By 2001, all states have assessments aligned to challenging content and performance standards for two or more core subjects.	• *23 states report assessments aligned with content standards, curriculum frameworks, or state goals. (CCSSO, 1996)* • *Analysis of state assessment results against National Assessment of Educational Progress state results reveals wide discrepancy in how proficiency is defined by several states (Southern Regional Education Board, 1996).*	• Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSS0), annual, 1997-2002 • NAEP/State analysis, Planning and Evaluation Service, 1997

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Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	9. By 2002, most of the general public and parents are aware of the importance of challenging academic standards for all children, including at least the majority of parents from low-income families.	• *82% of the general public supports setting up clear guidelines for what students should learn and teachers should teach in every major subject. (Public opinion poll, 1994 & 1996)* • *61% of Americans say academic standards are too low in their own local schools. (Public opinion poll, 1996)* • *33% of public supports raising academic standards much higher, 42% say somewhat higher. (Public opinion poll, 1996)*	• Public opinion polls dependent on private funding, unless Department supports.
1.2 Every state has a school-to-work (STW) system that increases student achievement and broadens career opportunities.	10. In local school-to-work systems, the percentage of students completing high school and entering postsecondary education will increase annually.	• *None*	• STW progress measures for 1997-2000 • National School-to-Work Evaluation • National Longitudinal Study of Youth, 2000
	11. Two million youth will be engaged actively in school-to-work systems by 2000.	• *None*	• STW progress measures for 1997-2000
	12. Thirty percent of high schools will have the key school-to-work system components in place by 2000.	• *59 percent of participating high schools had classes in which academic and work related curriculum are integrated. (STW Progress Measures, June 1996)* • *51 percent of high schools in participating local partnerships had classes in which work-based learning was connected to school curriculum. (STW Progress Measures, June 1996)*	• STW progress measures, collected annually.
	13. Employers increasingly provide work-based learning slots for school-to-work system students.	• *None*	• STW progress measures, collected annually, 1997. • National School-to-Work Evaluation, 1997

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	14. All youths with disabilities age 14 and older will have IEPs with statements of transition service needs that focus on courses of study in an advanced placement or vocational education program.		
1.3 Schools are safe, disciplined, and drug-free.	15. Recent increasing rates of alcohol and drug use among school-aged children will slow and begin to fall by 2000.	• *Annual use of marijuana: 8th grade, 7%; 10th grade, 15%; 12th grade, 22% (Monitoring the Future, 1992).* • *Annual use of alcohol: 45%, 8th grade; 63%, 10th grade; 73%, 12th grade (Monitoring the Future, 1993).*	• Monitoring the Future, annual
	16. The number of criminal and violent incidents in schools by students will show continuous decreases between now and 2002.	• *12th graders injured with a weapon: 5% (Monitoring the Future, 1993).* • *12th graders who had something stolen: 41% (Monitoring the Future, 1993).*	• National Crime Victimization Survey, 1997, triennial • Monitoring the Future, annual
	17. The percentage of students reporting negative attitudes toward drug and alcohol use will decline significantly between now and 2002.	• *Disapprove of trying marijuana: 8th grade, 82%; 10th grade, 75%; 12th grade, 70% (Monitoring the Future, 1992).* • *Disapprove of trying alcohol: 8th grade, 52%; 10th grade, 40%; 12th grade, 33% (Monitoring the Future, 1992).*	• Monitoring the Future, annual
	18. By 1999, at least 75% of local education agencies participating in the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program will use prevention programs that are based on the Department's principles of effectiveness.	• *Widespread use of programs that research has not shown to be effective.*	• Survey, to be developed by the Planning and Evaluation Service, 1998
	19. By 1999, all states will conduct periodic statewide surveys or collect statewide data of alcohol and drug use of students and incidents of crime and violence in schools.	• *In 1995, 24 states and territories that participated in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey had data representative for the state. (ED/Safe and Drug Free Schools Act Survey, 1997)*	• ED/Safe and Drug Free Schools Act Survey, annual
	20. The percentage of teachers who are appropriately trained to address discipline problems in the classroom will increase significantly by 2000.		

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
1.4 A talented and dedicated teacher is in every classroom in America.	21. Throughout the nation the percentage of secondary school teachers who have at least a minor in the subject they teach increases annually.	• *23% of teachers do not have at least a minor in their main teaching field.*	• Schools and Staffing Surveys, 1999-2000
	22. The percentage of teachers and principals across the nation who rate other teachers as very effective increases annually.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• Data source to be determined.
	23. By 2002, 75 percent of states will raise initial teacher certification standards to align with high content and student performance standards.	• *From 15-20 states are actively involved in reforming teacher education licensure. (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education Survey, 1995; Teacher Education Survey, 1995; personal communication with AACTE, 1996)*	• Surveys by national organizations such as the Council of Chief State School Officers, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.
	24. The percentage of new teachers who leave the profession within the first 3 years continuously decreases.	• *30% of all new teachers currently leave the profession within the first three years.*	• Teacher Follow Up Survey from Schools and Staffing Surveys
	25. The number of nationally board certified teachers continuously increases to 105,000 by 2006.	• *Approximately 575 teachers were nationally-board certified, as of spring 1997. (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1997)*	• National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, annually
1.5 Families and communities are fully involved with schools and education.	26. The percentage of students who come to school prepared for learning and having completed their homework will increase substantially over the next five years.	• *79% of parents of K-6 students indicated they check their child has completed homework every day or almost every day (IEL/Marttila & Kiley, A Study of Attitudes Among the Parents of Primary-School Children, 1995).* • *Teachers indicate that 12% of their Chapter 1 students and 7% of their non-Chapter 1 students have absenteeism problems. Teachers indicate that 15% of their Chapter 1 students and 9% of their non-Chapter 1 students get inadequate rest. Teachers indicate that 21% of their Chapter 1 students and 17% of their non-Chapter 1 students have hygiene problems. (Prospects Interim Report, 1993)*	• Follow-up Survey of Schools, 1997 • Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance, 1998 • Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998.

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	27. The percentage of young children who read regularly at home with their parents and on their own (at least 15 minutes a day, five days a week) will increase to 90% by 2002.	• *52% of parents of K-6 students indicate they read to or with their child almost every day (NHES 1993, 1995, in 1995 Goals Report).* • *72% of parents whose children are ages 3-5 indicate they read to their children or tell them stories regularly (IEL/Marttila & Kiley, A Study of Attitudes Among the Parents of Primary-School Children, 1995).*	• NCES Household Survey, 1999.
	28. The percentage of parents who meet with teachers about their children's learning will show continuous improvement, reaching 90% by 2002.	• *71% of parents reported that they went to a regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference or meeting (National Household Education Survey, 1996).* • *92% of schools surveyed reported that they held parent-teacher conferences.* *57% of those schools reported that most or all parents attended (Fast Response Survey System, 1996).*	• NCES' National Household Education Survey, 1999.
	29. The percentage of parents who say that the school actively encourages and facilitates family involvement by respecting and responding to parents' concerns and by involving them in decisions regarding their children will show continuous improvement.	• *Percentage of parents who agreed with the statement: "I am respected by the teachers and principals.":* *39% of 1st grade parents* *34% of 4th grade parents* *23% of 8th grade parents* *(Prospects analysis by Abt Associates, 1995, as cited in the 1995 Goals Report).* • *Percentage of schools reporting that parent input is considered to a moderate or great extent in making decisions on school issues: Allocation of funds, 39%; Curriculum or overall instructional programs, 47%; Discipline policies and procedures, 50%; Monitoring and evaluating teachers, 5%. (Fast Response Survey System—Survey on Family and Schools Partner-ships in Public Schools, K-8, 1996).*	• Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance, 1998

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
1.6 Public school choice supports school flexibility and accountability for meeting state content and performance standards.	30. By 2000, a minimum of 40 states will have charter school legislation.	• *11 states (1994)* • *26 states (1996)*	• Program files; annually
	31. By 2002, there will be 3,000 charter schools in operation around the nation.	• *64 charter schools (1994-95)* • *428 charter schools (January 1997)*	• Program files; annually
	32. By 2002, half of all school districts will make choice available to their students through magnet schools, charter schools, and open enrollment policies.		
	33. By 2002, 25 percent of all public school students in grades 3-12 will attend a school that they or their parents chose.		
1.7 Schools use advanced technology for all students and teachers to improve education.	34. All teachers and students will have multimedia computers in their classrooms by 2001.		• Advanced Telecommunications and U.S. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Survey, annual data elements 1997-2002.
	35. The percentage of public school instructional rooms connected to the Information Superhighway will increase from 14 percent in 1996 to 25 percent in 1998, and an increasingly larger percentage thereafter.	• *14 percent in 1996: (Advanced Telecommunications in U.S. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Survey).*	• Advanced Telecommunications and U.S. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Survey, annual data elements 1997-2002.
	36. At least 50 percent of teachers will integrate high-quality educational technology, high-quality software, and the Information Superhighway into their school curriculum for effective support of student learning by 2001.	• *20% of teachers in 1996 use advanced telecommunications for teaching (Advanced Telecommunications in U.S. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Survey)*	• Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998, 1999. • State annual report cards (voluntary)
	37. Students in high-poverty schools and students with disabilities will have access to advanced technology (including assistive technology for students with disabilities) that is comparable to that in other schools by the year 2001.	• *Internet access by 53% of high poverty schools , compared to 78% in low poverty schools :1996 (Advanced Telecommunications in U.S. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Survey)* • *Disability data pending receipt of data from the Office of Research and Improvement (OERI)*	• Advanced Telecommunications in U.S. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Survey, annual data elements 1997-2002. • Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998, 1999

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
Goal 2. Build a solid foundation for learning.			
2.1 All children enter school ready to learn.	38. The majority of kindergarten and first grade teachers report that their students enter school with readiness skills for reading and math.	• *None.*	• Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, 1999 • Propose new cohort for 2003, working with NCES and ACYF
	39. The percentage of 0- to 5-year-olds whose parents read to them or tell them stories regularly increases.	• *66% (National Household Education Survey, 1993)*	• National Household Education Survey, 1999 • Michigan Time Use Study, 1998
	40. The disparity in preschool participation rates between children from high- income families and children from low-income families declines continuously year by year.	• *28% (National Household Education Survey, 1991)* • *25% (Current Population Survey, 1995)*	• National Household Education Survey, 1999 • Current Population Survey, annual
2.2 Every child reads independently by the end of the third grade.	41. All students achieve to the basic level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2002.	• *60% of 4th graders scored at or above the basic level in reading in (National Assessment of Educational Progress—NAEP, 1994).*	• National Assessment of Educational Progress
	42. Increasing percentages of fourth graders will meet proficient and advanced levels in reading on NAEP.	• *60% of 4th graders scored at or above the basic level in reading in (National Assessment of Educational Progress—NAEP, 1994).*	• National Assessment of Educational Progress
	43. At least 20 states implement the national reading test by 1999; all states implement the national reading test by 2002.	• *5 states and the Department of Defense Schools have signed up to implement the national voluntary test (Department records, 1997).*	• Department records, 1997-2002
	44. The America Reads Challenge legislation passes, and over a 3-year period starting in 1998, the corps prepares tutors for 3 million children.	• *None*	• America Reads program files
	45. Increasing percentages of teachers of kindergarten through third grade complete intensive professional development to enable them to skillfully teach reading.	• *None*	• Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998 • Schools and Staffing Surveys, 1999-2000

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	46. At least 100,000 college work-study students tutor children in reading annually.	• *None*	• America Reads program files
2.3 By the end of the eighth grade, every student will master challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry.	47. At least 20 states implement the national math test by 1999; all states by 2002.	• *5 states and the Department of Defense Schools have signed up to implement the national voluntary test (Department records, 1997).*	• Department records, 1997-2002
	48. More eighth graders reach the basic level or higher levels of proficiency in math on the National Assessment of Educational Progress: at least 60% will score at the international median by 2002; at least 15% will be in the top 10% internationally by 2002.	• *61% of students scored at or above the basic level in 1996; 56% in 1992; and 51% in 1990. (National Assessment of Educational Progress—NAEP)*	• NAEP, biennial, 1998 • National Voluntary test, 1999
	49. Each year, more new teachers enter the workforce with adequate preparation to teach challenging mathematics to students in kindergarten through eighth grade	• *The average number of undergraduate mathematics courses K-8 teachers took was 3 (Schools and Staffing Surveys, 1993-94).*	• Schools and Staffing Surveys, 1999-2000 • Survey of Recent College Graduates • States' pass rates on rigorous licensing exams, 1997?
	50. Each year, more teachers in grades 5-8 complete intensive professional development to enable them to teach challenging mathematics.		• Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998 • Schools and Staffing Surveys, 1999-2000
	51. By 1998, schools have access to and use information on best practices for math instruction through technical assistance from their districts, states, and ED regional labs, comprehensive centers, the Eisenhower Consortium, and other sources.	• *67% of all teachers reported using curricula aligned with high standards in math. (Baseline Survey of Schools, 1996)* • *82% of all teachers reported using instructional strategies (i.e., hands-on activities, cooperative learning) aligned with high standards in math. (Baseline Survey of Schools, 1996)* • *22% of all teachers reported using innovative technologies such as the Internet and telecommunications-supported instruction in math. (Baseline Survey of Schools, 1996)*	• Follow-up Survey of Schools, 1997 • Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998 • Percent of textbooks and instructional materials that independent experts consider exemplary and align with high standards, 1997?

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
2.4 Special populations receive appropriate services and assessments consistent with high standards.	52. States will implement appropriate procedures for assessing students who have disabilities, are limited English proficient, or are children of migrant workers, by 2001.	• *State assessment staff report that 24 states include LEP students in testing for Title I, and 17 include students with disabilities. (ED State Implementation Survey, 1997)*	• Follow-up ED State Implementation Survey, 1999 • Title I Performance Reports, 1998-2002
	53. The number of schools using comprehensive, research-based approaches to improve curriculum and instruction and support services for at-risk students increases annually.	• *A baseline survey of schools found that a greater percentage of principals in higher poverty schools report implementing curriculum and support strategies in support of comprehensive reform than their counterparts in lower poverty schools. (Public School Survey on Education Reform, to be published in June 1997).*	• Follow-up Surveys of Schools, 1997 • Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998-2000
	54. Administrators and educators working with at-risk children will have access to and use high-quality information and technical assistance on effective practices provided by Department- sponsored technical assistance and research centers as well as through professional associations and publications.	• *State officials identify oral and written federal sources of information and assistance, as well as professional associations and publications as most helpful. Districts rely most heavily on state sources, professional associations, and education publications. (Baseline surveys in "Reports on Reform from the Field," June 1997).* • *Principals in rely most often on institutes or workshops, other principals, LEAs, and state- or district-sponsored conferences for information and technical assistance. Direct support to schools from the U.S. Department of Education was uncommon (Public School Survey on Education Reform, June 1997).*	• Cross-cutting District Survey and Case Studies, 1998 • Follow-up State Survey, 1999; Follow-up Survey of Schools , 1998 • Longitudinal Survey of Schools, 1998-2000
	55. Bilingual education and special education resources focus on improving the skills of school staff working with special populations.		

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Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	56. Federal technical assistance and other support to states will result in annual increases in the number of states and local school districts with the capacity to disaggregate and report out assessment data aligned with standards for at-risk students.	• *12 states report data disaggregated by economic disadvantage, 16 by race/ethnicity, and 1 by migrant status. (State Accountability Reports, 1997)* • *18 states report fully implementing disaggregated reporting procedures (ED State Implementation Survey, 1997).*	• Crosscutting Survey of Local Districts (1998) • Follow-up State Survey (1999)

Goal 3. Ensure access to postsecondary education and lifelong learning

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
3.1 Postsecondary education is affordable for all Americans.	57. Considering all sources of financial aid, the percent of unmet need, especially for low income students, will show continuous decreases over time.	• *In 1992-93, percent of unmet need was 30% for all students ranging from 54% for low-income independent students to 4% for upper-income dependent students. (National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, 1997 and 2001)*	• National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, 1997 and 2001
	58. The gap in college participation between low- and high-income high school graduates will decrease each year.	• *High income students enrolled at a rate that was 32 percentage points higher than the rate for low-income students. (Current Population Survey, 1995)*	• Current Population Survey, annual
	59. Quality Control Reviews by ED's Inspector General will find that required institutional audits show increasing levels of quality each year.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• Institutional Participation and Oversight Service (IPOS) data, annual, beginning in 1997.
	60. Institutional compliance rates will show yearly increases over the baseline.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• Contractor and IPOS data, annual, requires an estimated $3.8 million in contract costs to obtain the data.
	61. The rate at which adverse findings/determinations are sustained will show continuous yearly improvement over the baseline.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• IPOS data, 1997, and Postsecondary Education Participant System, annual beginning in 1997.

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	62. Cash management ratios for individual schools and the program as a whole will show continuous improvement on a yearly basis.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• Office of Postsecondary Education program data, quarterly beginning in 1997.
	63. The cohort default rates for the Federal Family Education Loan and the Direct Loan Program will decline to a level of 10% percent or less and will remain stable or decline over time.	• *For FY 1990 - 1994, default rates were 22.4%, 17.8%, 15.0%,, 11.6%, and 10.7 respectively, dropping by more than 52% over the five year period. (OPE data, FY 1990-1994)*	• OPE data, annual.
3.2 Students receive the information and support services they need to prepare for and complete postsecondary education.	64. By the year 2000, a majority of prospective students at age 12 and above and their parents will have an accurate assessment of the cost of attending college and the aid available for college.	• *In 1996, the general public overestimated postsecondary tuition by $2,330 in two-year public colleges, $3,148 in four-year public universities, and $4,990 in four-year private universities. In 1998, 11.4% of parents of 8th graders agreed with the statement, "I do not see anyway of getting enough money for my 8th grades to go to college" and 16.5% had not thought about college costs.*	• A survey of middle school parents will be conducted in 1997. • No determination has yet been made regarding the collection of data from students.
	65. The gap between the percent of low- and high-income students who graduate from a four-year and from a two-year college will show continuous decreases over time.	• *Among students in the lowest income quartile entering college in 1990, 34% had graduated by 1994 compared to 57% of students in the highest income quartile.*	• Beginning Postsecondary Student study, 2001.
	66. The percentage of middle/junior high and high school students who are aware of academic requirements for college of postsecondary vocational enrollment will increase each year.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• No determination has yet been made regarding the collection of data from students.
	67. Participants in the TRIO programs enroll in and complete postsecondary programs at rates higher than comparable non-participants.	• *For low-income, first-generation college students participating in the Student Support Services program 61 percent who began at two-year schools and 80 percent who began at four-year schools were still enrolled in college in the third year.*	• Upward Bound evaluation, 1997 • Student Support Services evaluation, 1999

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Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
3.3 All adults can strengthen their skills and improve their earning power throughout their lives.	68. By 2002, the literacy skills of American adults will improve as shown by fewer adults performing at the lowest proficiency level on the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) in 1992.	• *Between 40 and 44 million adults performed in the lowest of five proficiency levels. (1992, NALS)*	• NALS II, 2004
	69. Increasing numbers of adults enrolled in beginning adult basic education programs and English as a second language programs will achieve proficiency in basic skills as measured by standardized tests.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• Adult Education Management Information System and its successor, a new national data reporting system. Annual collection. • Evaluation of adult education programs.
	70. The percentage of all persons exiting the vocational rehabilitation system after receiving services who obtain competitive employment will increase each year.	• *61 percent (Rehabilitation Services Administration State Data, 1996)*	• Rehabilitation Services Administration state data, annual collection.
	71. The percentage of individuals obtaining competitive employment who maintain employment and earnings 24 months after completion of vocational rehabilitation will increase by 2002.	• *Baseline to be determined using the long-term follow up methodology currently being developed as a part of the Section 106 Standards and Indicators.* • *Baseline also from Vocational Rehabilitation Longitudinal Study, 1998*	• Data to be collected periodically using methodology developed for the Section 106 Standards and Indicators • Vocational Rehabilitation Longitudinal Study, 1998

Goal 4. Make ED a high-performance organization by focusing on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
4.1 Our customers receive fast, seamless service and dissemination of high-quality information and products.	72. By 2000, all customers, internal and external, agree that ED products, services, and information, including those on the Department's web site, are of high quality, timely, and accessible.	• *On a scale of 1-5, customers rated the World Wide Web site on: timeliness, 4.25; ease of finding information, 3.85; overall usefulness, 4.07. (World Wide Web customer survey, 1997)*	• World Wide Web customer survey, ongoing
	73. Department employees and front-line service centers meet or exceed established customer service standards.	• *71% of customers were completely or somewhat satisfied with telephone service. (Phone survey, 1996)* *[Additional data on phone service and control correspondence available.]*	• Phone survey follow up, 1997 • Control correspondence survey follow up, 1997 • Additional surveys of customer service standards being planned

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	74. Quarterly evaluation reports for the "One-Pubs" system, based on quality assurance surveillance, indicate that high standards of performance are achieved for dissemination of ED's information products.	• *78% of publications were received within 8 days of request; 22% of publications were never received. (Phone survey, 1996)*	• Publications contractor surveillance plan, monthly reports beginning 1998
4.2 Our partners have the support and flexibility they need without diminishing accountability for results.	75. States and school districts rate the Department's technical assistance, including assistance from the integrated reviews, as very useful in improving their performance.	• *States rate oral and written information as most helpful; the comprehensive centers are considered the least helpful form of technical assistance by state administrators of federal programs. (Baseline surveys in "Reports on Reform from the Field," June 1997)* • *Districts rely more upon 'other' sources of information and states than the federal government for assistance. (Baseline surveys in "Reports on Reform from the Field," June 1997)* *[Will include data on integrated reviews from state survey.]*	• Follow-up State Survey, 1999 • Cross-cutting District Survey and Case Studies, 1998
	76. By 2002, the number of separate ED programs will decline significantly from the current 197 in FY 1997.	• *95 programs (Department records, 1997)*	• Review of Department records, annual, 1998-2002
	77. Customers increasingly report that they have greater flexibility and better understanding of ED rules.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• Regulatory Reinvention Initiative reports • Focus groups with customers affected by regulations • Recommendations and feedback from customers
	78. New discretionary grants processed using the re-engineered grant-making process are awarded each year on an timely basis.	• *Percent of total new grants planned that were awarded on time. (Grants and Contracts Management System, 1996)*	• Grants and Contracts Management System, 1997 • Education Central Automated Processing System, Grant Application and Payment System, 1998-2002

U.S. Department of Education Strategic Plan, 1998-2002 — DRAFT

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	79. Reports from program monitoring teams and audit reports under the Single Audit Act show a reduction in significant recurring findings, as a result of participation in the Cooperative Audit Resolution and Oversight Initiative.	• *Baseline to be determined. (Audit reports from a random sampling of states, 1996)* • *Common Audit Resolution System* — *1995: 0 states* — *1996: 3 states* — *1997: 10 states*	• Audit reports from tracking the same states sampled, annual, 1997-2002 • Common Audit Resolution System, 1997-2002
4.3 An up-to-date knowledge base is available from education research to support education reform and equity.	80. Peer reviews show that education research and statistics supported by the Department are of high quality, are focused on critical education reform issues, and contribute significantly to educational improvement.		
	81. Education research meets the needs of our partners (e.g., states, schools, institutions of higher education) and our customers (teachers, parents, students, business) for reliable information on how to make schools more effective.	• *Evaluation of the Eisenhower Regional Consortia Customer Survey, 1996* • *NCES Annual Customer Survey, 1996* • *Centers Final Report, 1996*	• Customer surveys of key customers and stakeholders • Longitudinal Evaluation of Schools, 1999 • Specific customer surveys for ERIC, the Centers, and the Regional Labs • Regional Lab Program Evaluation
	82. Department programs and policies are based on sound research and evaluation results.	• *None*	• Review by national experts (peer review) • Phase III standards
4.4 Our information technology investments are sound and used to improve impact and efficiency.	83. All computers and information systems will be Year 2000 compliant when necessary, by December 31, 1999.	• *7 mission critical systems need repair. (Internal reporting on inventory of systems, 1997)*	• Inventory of systems being repaired, ongoing, 1997-2002 • Inventory of equipment, ongoing, 1997-2002 • Monitoring of status, ongoing, 1997-2002
	84. At least 90% of all employees assess productivity as "significantly improved" as a result of available technology, as shown by the Employee Survey in 2000.	• *70 percent agree. (Employee Survey, 1996)*	• Employee Survey, 2000

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Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	85. All Information Technology Review Board assessments will show that major systems are mission-driven, cost effective, consistent with our information technology architecture, and supported by performance-based contracts.		
	86. The percentage of federal student aid applications transmitted through the Internet will increase annually resulting in higher accuracy and reduced processing costs.	• *Number of electronic 1997-98 FAFSAs (Free Applications for Federal Student Aid) processed, to be determined. (OPE Central Processing System, 1997)* • *Cost of processing 1997-98 FAFSAs, to be determined. (OPE Central Processing System, 1997)*	• Reports from OPE Central Processing System, annual, 1997-2002
	87. Users will express high satisfaction with the student loan data system and the new Easy Access for Students and Institutions (EASI) system.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	
	88. Data reporting burden on the public will be reduced by five percent annually.	• *10 percent reduction in 1996 (Analysis of information collection forms, 1996)*	• Information collection forms, annual, 1997-2002 • Review of forms, ongoing, 1997-2002
4.5 The Department is a learning organization with high-performing employees.	89. By 2002, ED staff FTEs will total 4,495, an 11 percent decrease from 1993, while sustaining high-quality service and productivity.	• *FTE ceiling in 1993 was 5,151 (Budget Service records)*	• Budget Service records, annual, 1997-2002
	90. Peer review of the quality of Department-sponsored employee training shows that the training is among the best in the federal government and comparable to the best in the private sector.	• *Baseline to be determined.*	• Evaluation study

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Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	91. By 2000, most employees and managers, as needed, obtain assistance from knowledgeable, courteous staff on resolving employee disputes, and the disputes are closed quickly and informally whenever possible.	• *29% satisfaction with grievance process (Employee Survey, 1993)* • *29% resolved at counseling (EEO 462 Report, 1993)* • *548 average lapsed days for formals (EEO 462 Report, 1993)*	• Planned Assessment, 2000 • Tracking Reports on EEO and IDRC activities, ongoing
	92. By 2000, at least 70% of ED employees agree that the multi-evaluator General Performance Appraisal System (GPAS) improves individual employee performance and development, and aligns employee goals with the overall mission of the Department.	• *Previous GPAS system did not serve to improve employee performance or development. (Final Report of Performance Evaluation Improvement Team)* • *47% agree they receive feedback on performance. (Employee Survey, 1993)* • *34% agree they receive guidance on career development from supervisors. (Employee Survey, 1993)* • *48% agree performance agreement reflects fit in ED. (Employee Survey, 1996)*	• GPAS Evaluation Report, August 1997 • Follow-up evaluation and/or employee survey, 2000
	93. By 2000, most employees indicate satisfaction with their work environment (e.g., physical surroundings, noise level, air quality), security, and accessibility.	• *In 1993: Satisfaction with work environment, 31%; security, 39%; accommodations for persons with disabilities, 48%; 79% indicated work environment affects quality of work. (Employee Survey, 1993)* • *In 1996: Satisfaction with work environment, 49%; security, 50%; accommodations for persons with disabilities, 62%. (Employee Survey, 1996)*	• Planned Assessment, 2000
4.6 **Management of our programs and services ensures financial integrity.**	94. By 1999, the Education Central Automated Processing System (EDCAPS) will be fully implemented and providing assistant secretaries, the Chief Financial Officer, and program managers with consistent, timely, and reliable financial and program information, through an assessment by the Information Technology Board.	• *Baseline available starting 1998.*	• Education Central Automated Processing System, 1998-2002 • Employee Survey, 2000

Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	95. Evaluation of contracts will indicate that better than fully successful performance, including quality, cost control, timeliness, and other factors, is being received by the government and the taxpayer.	• *Will establish the baseline with 1997 data.*	• Agency evaluations of contractor performance, annually
	96. Auditors issue a clean opinion on the Department-wide annual financial statements every year.	• *Disclaimer on Audit Opinion (Inspector General-contracted audit report, FY 95)*	• Inspector General-contracted audit report, FY 1997-2002
	97. The Department's fund control system and staff continue to prevent anti-deficiency violations, while ensuring timely awards of grants and contracts and maximizing the use of available budget resources.	• *FY 1997: 0 violations.*	• Annual end-of-year Budget Execution and Treasury reports on planned and actual obligations; ongoing ED grant and contract award schedule reports
4.7 All levels of the agency meet the Results Act goal to become fully performance-driven.	98. Employees recognize the strategic plan as meaningful and understand how their work supports achieving the plan's goals and objectives.	• *In 1993: 60% of employees have a clear understanding of how the goals and strategies of their principal office support the mission of the Department. (Employee Survey, 1993)* • *In 1996: 74% of employees have a clear understanding of how the goals and strategies of their principal office support the mission of the Department. (Employee Survey, 1996)*	• Employee Survey, 2000
	99. Senior leadership and managers' reviews of performance indicator data result in appropriate follow-up actions.	• *None*	• Tracking system for strategic plan indicators, 1997-2002 • Ongoing progress reports on objectives, 1997-2002 • Employee Survey, 2000
	100. Independent assessments verify that all large and selected other ED programs have comprehensive, high quality performance measurement systems that are used for program improvement and accountability by 1999.	• *None*	• Department-funded assessment by a respected independent organization, 2000

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Objective	Indicators	*Existing baseline data (source, year)*	Data source and year(s) to be collected for indicator (1997-2002)
	101. By 1999, all ED program managers assert that the data used for their program's performance measurement are reliable and valid, or have remedial plans.	• *None*	• Inspector General's report, 1999
	102. Managers agree that policy, budget, and resource allocation decisions are aligned with the strategic priorities of the Department.	• *None*	• Employee Survey, 2000

Comments from Reviewers

We seek your suggestions and opinions on the Department of Education's strategic plan. Your opinion on the appropriateness of the goals, objectives, indicators, and strategies are welcome, as are suggestions for re-wording or revision.

You may comment below, send us a letter, or send us a copy of the plan marked-up with your edits and comments. Please identify whether you are representing an organization or are providing your comments as an individual. Send your comments *on or before July 22, 1997*, to:

> Alan Ginsburg
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Thanks for taking the time to comment. Your suggestions are valued and will be given consideration.